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April 1921

THE
RED BOOK
MAGAZINE



Editorial Staff—Serials by Nabro Barkley and Clara Schilling, Kate
Shaw, and Vernon, Story with Nicholson, Henry C. Howard, Jack B.
Hart, and John P. MacFarlane, and a special feature by...



"BESS, you're a wonder! This is just the kind of a home I like—simple, but attractive. And that Congoleum Rug—there's an idea full of common sense—saved money and looks fine."

Gold-Seal Congoleum Art-Rugs—beautiful in design and economical in cost—fit in wonderfully well with the modern idea of housekeeping.

They are absolutely sanitary—the smooth, firm, waterproof surface cannot harbor dust and germs. Just a light going-over with a damp mop leaves Congoleum bright as a new penny.

This ease of cleaning saves hours of time. Woven rugs take so long to sweep—just about five times as long as this modern floor-covering.

And the crowning feature of Gold-Seal Congoleum Rugs is their charm. The colors are rich and harmonious—the patterns, artistic reproductions of beautiful Oriental rugs. In the variety of colors and designs you will find suit-

able styles for every room in your house.

Easy to lay? The simplest thing possible—no tacks or fastenings of any kind. They lie perfectly flat without "kicking up" or curling.

Popular Sizes—Popular Prices

1½ x 3 feet	\$.80	6 x 9 feet	\$9.75
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Prices in the Far West and South average 15% higher than those quoted; in Canada prices average 25% higher. All prices subject to change without notice.

Write our nearest branch office for copy of booklet, "Modern Rugs for Modern Homes."

Don't forget that the Gold Seal identifies the one and only grade of Congoleum made.

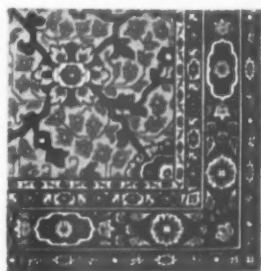
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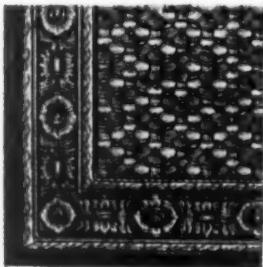
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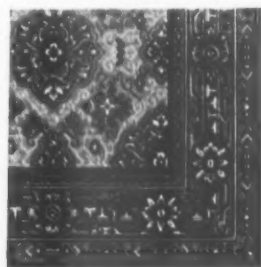


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Gold-Seal Congoleum Art-Rug No. 362

Gold Seal CONGOLEUM ART-RUGS



Gold-Seal Congoleum Art-Rug No. 367.



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Rachmaninoff himself chose the Victor

Rachmaninoff knows music. Knows how to compose it, how to play it—and how it should be reproduced. It is significant that the great composer-pianist in the light of previous experience has chosen to associate himself with the other famous artists of the world who make records for the Victor.

Hear Rachmaninoff's Victor Record of Mendelssohn's "Spinning Song" played on the Victrola and you hear the great pianist exactly as he wishes you to hear his own work.

Victrolas \$25 to \$1500. New Victor Records demonstrated at all dealers on the 1st of each month.



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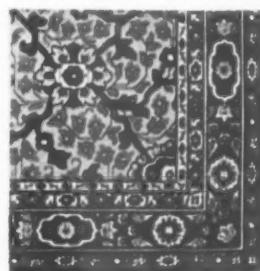
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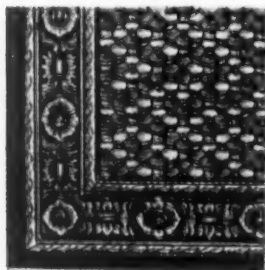
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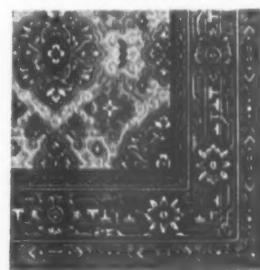


Gold-Seal Congoleum Art-Rug No. 370.

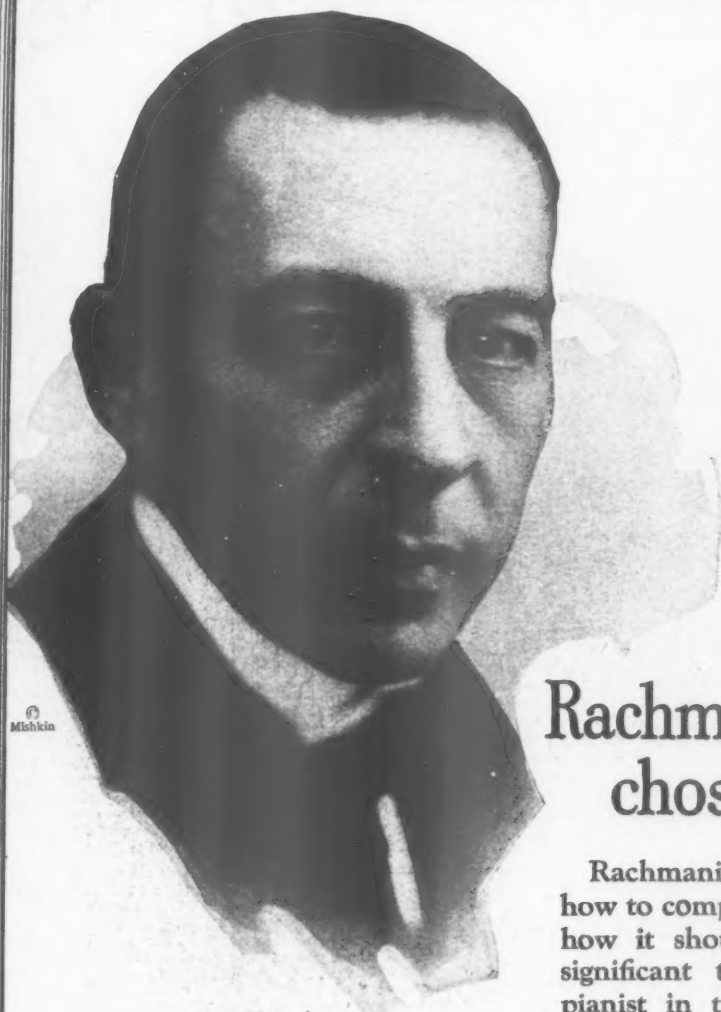


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How Would You Introduce This Newcomer?

IF you were the hostess of a dinner party and your out-of-town guest arrived rather late, how would you present him? Would you introduce him to all at once? Would you introduce him to the person in whose honor the dinner is given? Would you take him to each guest individually? Which is correct?

The man who would be cultured, well-mannered, and the woman who would possess that coveted gift of charm, must cultivate the art of introduction. For he who can create a pleasant atmosphere between strangers, who can make conversation run smoothly and pleasantly, distinguishes himself as a person of breeding.

Every day, in both the business and social worlds, occasion arises for the introduction. Perhaps it is a business acquaintance who desires to meet your brother. Perhaps it is a friend who would like to meet another friend. The next time you introduce two people, notice whether the feeling you create is friendly and pleasant or whether it is uncomfortably strained.

Let us pretend that you are at the club with Mr. Jones, a young friend. There you meet elderly Mr. Blank. In introducing your two friends, would you say, "Mr. Blank, let me present Mr. Jones," or "Mr. Jones, let me present Mr. Blank"? If Mr. Blank is the cultured, well-bred gentleman he seems to be, would he say, "Pleased to meet you"? What would be the correct thing for him to say?

As he is an old friend of the family, you take Mr. Blank home for dinner. But your sister has never met him. Would you say, "Mr. Blank, this is my sister, Rose," or, "Rose, this is Mr. Blank"? Is it correct for Mr. Blank and Rose to shake hands? If she is seated, shall Rose rise and acknowledge her brother's introduction?

Later in the evening you go with Mr. Blank to the theatre. In the lobby, Mr. Blank recognizes some friends of his wife, and he greets them. You have never met the ladies; never spoken to them. Should you lift your hat, or merely nod and smile?

In the box at the theatre is Mrs. Blank with several friends. Mr. Blank presents you—do you shake hands with the ladies? Do you bow to Mrs. Blank? Would you use any of these expressions: "How do you do?" "Pleased to know you," "Delighted."

Ordinary, haphazard introductions are as ungraceful as they are ungratifying. If correctly rendered, the introduction becomes a graceful and becoming art. To be able to introduce correctly is to command the respect and honor of all with whom you come in contact.

How Do You Ask a Lady to Dance?

One breach of etiquette in the ballroom condemns you as a hopeless vulgarian! One little blunder and people begin to wonder whether you are such a tremendous success, after all!

If you are truly a gentleman your gallantry will distinguish you in the ballroom. If you are a cultured woman, your grace and delicacy will make you the envy of less charming women. The ballroom is, without doubt, the ideal place to impress by one's culture and refinement.

Let us pretend once again. You have taken your fiancée to a dance. The first few dances were hers, of course. But for the fourth you decide to ask a young lady, who happens to be a wall-flower, to share with you. How shall you excuse yourself to your fiancée? How do you ask the other young lady to dance? Which are the correct and which the incorrect forms? Can you make the young lady feel happy and at ease, or will she feel uncomfortable and embarrassed?

The music ceases and you must return to your fiancée. Do you find another partner for the young lady you have been dancing with? Do you escort her back to her seat? What is the proper thing to do; to say?



It is growing rather late, and you are warm and tired. Is it in accordance with etiquette's laws to wander out on the veranda? What is the correct thing to do if you cannot, for any reason, fulfill a promised dance?

And the woman at the dance. What shall she wear? May she under any condition ask for a dance? May she refuse to dance without reason? What are the usual forms of refusal? How many times is it correct for a girl to dance with the same partner? What shall the young girl who is not asked to dance do?

Both the man and woman must know the etiquette of the ballroom—must know just what to do and what to say. It is the badge of culture and refinement, and not even poverty can hide it.

What Shall I Wear To-Night?

You have asked yourself that question many times. "What shall I wear to-night?" Whether you are a man or a woman, it is utterly essential that you wear only what is perfect in taste and correct according to the etiquette of the occasion. What does a man wear to an afternoon dance? What does a woman wear? What is worn to the evening entertainment? To the wedding? To the funeral? Do you know what a Tuxedo is? When is it worn? We will pretend, once again, that you are invited to an important afternoon function. What would you wear? Is the high silk hat correct? And if your sister accompanies you, what should she wear?

Are pearls worn in the afternoon? When are diamonds worn, and to what functions? What is the proper dress for the young lady's chaperon? Is it permissible to wear black to a wedding, even if one is in mourning?

The world is an extremely harsh judge. It judges you by what you wear even more severely than by what you do and say. If you would be respected, if you would be conceded a success, you must dress correctly and in full accordance with etiquette's laws.

ENCYCLOPEDIA of ETIQUETTE

In Two Comprehensive Volumes

The world demands culture. If you can hold yourself well in hand, if you can have the polish and poise that come with the knowledge that you are doing and saying only what is absolutely correct, you will be admitted to the highest society. If you are refined, well-bred, you will command respect wherever you go.

The "Encyclopedia of Etiquette" makes it possible for every one to be polished, cultivated. It tells you just what is right to do and wear and write and say at all times. It corrects the blunders you have, perhaps unconsciously, been making. It dispels the lingering doubts that have cost you your self-confidence. It

helps you, with its rich illustrations, to solve the problems that have been puzzling you. It comes to you, in fact, as a revelation toward perfect etiquette.

With the "Encyclopedia of Etiquette" to refer to, you will be without question cultured in your dinner etiquette. You will know what to do and say, without embarrassment, when you overturn a cup of coffee on your hostess's tablecover. You will know how to eat lettuce leaves, and how to use your knife correctly. You will know how to dispose of cherry and grape stones. You will know how to use the finger-bowl, and the napkin with the ease and grace that bespeaks culture of the highest degree.

The splendid two-volume set reveals to you the definite conventions that the world demands at the wedding and the funeral. It reveals the secret of correct introduction and acknowledgments. It tells you how to word your calling cards, your wedding invitations, your cards of thanks. It helps you to be cultivated and refined at all times.

Send No Money!

A complete and enlarged two-volume set of the "Encyclopedia of Etiquette" is being offered to meet the increased demands. This new edition will go quickly. Each volume is attractive, well bound and a delightful addition to your library. And the two volumes will be sent you absolutely free for five days.

Are YOU sure that you know how to introduce two people correctly? Do YOU know your dinner etiquette so well that you can dine with the most cultured people of your acquaintance, and be thoroughly at ease? Do YOU know just what is right to do and say and wear and write on every occasion?

You will find invaluable aid in this splendid two-volume Encyclopedia of Etiquette. You will want to keep it handy where you can refer to it again and again. Send for your set now—just the coupon will do—and discover for yourself how much there really is to know in the world of good society.

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We can assure all subscribers that their copies are being mailed as early as heretofore, in fact, earlier; any delay in delivery will, therefore, result from causes entirely beyond our control, which not only affect magazine deliveries but delivery of shipments of every description.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY
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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

APRIL
1921



BOOTH TARKINGTON

the distinguished author of
"Penrod," "Seventeen,"
"The Magnificent Ambersons," "Alice Adams," etc.,
begins his new association
with

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

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Illustrated by Edward Ryan
- ✓ Conflict By Clarence Budington Kelland 57
Illustrated by Frank Street
- ✓ Beauty By Rupert Hughes 71
Illustrated by W. T. Benda

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“I’m afraid~ *yes, sir, afraid!*”

THE man’s name and record are on file in the Institute’s offices. This is his story, just as he told it to the Institute man. He sat in the office of the little company of which he was the superintendent, and the Alexander Hamilton Institute representative had hardly introduced himself before he asked for the enrolment blank.

“It would be funny if it wasn’t so tragic,” he said, “how we procrastinate in doing the thing we know we ought to do.

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Somehow I put it off

“THEN came promotion to the better job I hold today. I felt the need of an all-around business training a great deal more than I had felt it before. But still I delayed, and now—” he stopped and smiled, and then went on with a serious note of regret.

“Now the thing has happened to me that I’ve been working for and praying for ever since I left school. I’ve just landed a new job. A real job! Understand I’m to be practically the whole works in this new place. The decisions will all be mine. Buying, accounting, sales, advertising, factory management, finance—I’ll be responsible for them all.

"And I'm afraid, yes, sir, plain afraid. I haven't got the training that I ought to have begun to get two years ago . . . the training that you offered, and that I meant to take.

"Suppose I fail in this new big job! Why, it would set me back for years! I don't intend to fail, of course. I'm going to dig into this Course with all my might and learn as fast as I can. But I ought to have begun two years ago. What a fool I was to put it off."

"The tragic penalty of delay

IT IS because incidents like this are told to Alexander Hamilton Institute men every day in the year that we are printing this man's story in his own simple words.

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Business training for those who take it costs a little sacrifice in money and time. But what a tragic price they pay who never take it, or put off their decision year after year.

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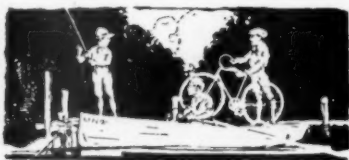
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How I Ate a Pound a Day Off My Weight

An Amazing discovery in weight reduction; no starving, no medicines, no special foods, no course of baths, no exercises, no "mind cure."

"AREN'T you heavier than you used to be?" This would nearly always be the first remark I'd hear whenever I met an old friend or acquaintance. And they were right. No doubt about it, I was fast putting on weight to a noticeable extent.

At first I took it as a sure sign of vigorous health. I had always thought that the accumulation of fat was Nature's way of storing up health and energy—a sort of reserve to draw upon in time of need. So I revelled in my good fortune and felt genuinely sorry for my friends who were not so favored by Nature.

But soon my condition began to be serious. I was getting altogether too fat. My increasing stoutness began to be about all I could think of—it entirely occupied my mind. My friends began to mention it. I couldn't walk a block without puffing. My heart became affected.

I Gave Up Pleasures to No Avail

I had always led an active life, being fond of athletics, horse-back riding and other exercises. My increasing weight made it difficult for me to "go in" for these things. I simply couldn't get around as fast as the others—even my walk was different; and besides any sort of physical exertion became unpleasant to me. I don't need to go into details, for anyone with a tendency to stoutness will well know what I mean.

This lack of exercise could lead to but one thing; I took on weight to an alarming extent, and I shall never forget the day when I realized that I was slowing down mentally as well as physically. I lost interest in my work and all social affairs. Anything requiring exertion was passed up. Understand me, please, I am not trying to praise my former self and figure; I'm simply telling how my mental and physical powers and pleasure decreased as fat was increased.

Starving Only Made Things Worse

You can probably guess my next move—nearly every "fat" woman has taken it. I became a follower of the "simple life." I cut down on my diet—and felt hungry all the time. Then I took a course of baths. According to weights taken "before and after" the baths cut down my weight. But within a day or so the weight was back again. The baths had only a temporary effect.



And it seemed to me that they were sapping my vitality.

Then I tried the plan of going without liquids; omitting certain food from my all-too-meager diet; of eating widely advertised "reducing foods," and finally of taking medicine.

By this time life had lost much of its joy for me. As my weight increased so did my distress. I simply had to do something. So I started to find out all I could about obesity. I questioned physicians, surgeons, army doctors, health specialists and a lot of women and men who were similarly afflicted. Soon I became a walking encyclopedia of weight reduction. But still I continued to put on weight.

Fat People Die Young

One day I experienced a shock. I was reading some health statistics by life insurance companies. These showed conclusively that in addition to causing mental and physical inefficiency fatness brings on a serious chain of illnesses, such as heart trouble, diabetes, stomach and intestinal trouble, apoplexy and the like. And then I read that fat people die young. No supposition about this. Plain, cold, hard facts, drawn from life insurance statistics, covering the experiences of tens of thousands of people and several generations.



At Last I Found the Secret

My lucky star must have been working for me about this time, for I ran across just the kind of practical help I was looking for. A friend advised me to read "Weight Control, the Basis of Health," by the famous Food Specialist, Eugene Christian.

This course, in the form of simple little lessons, completely upset my own personal opinions and all that I had learned about obesity and health. It shows that when one starts to put on weight it is not a sign of health, but of ill-health. Obesity is actually a disease. Then it showed that most of the tables of weights indicating what a person of a certain age and height should weigh are all wrong and why.

Then there were some startling new ideas about the maintenance of health and of mental and physical vigor. No theories, but hard, practical facts, drawn from the experiences of thousands of men and women in all conditions of life.

The remarkable part of it all was that there were no fads in Eugene Christian's methods, no special baths, no self-denying diet, no medicine, no exercises—nothing out of the ordinary. Simply go on living a normal life, eat appetizing, delicious foods, properly combined, do pretty much as you please. And still one could reduce his or her weight to normal in a very short time by entirely natural methods.

A Pound Less a Day Without the Slightest Hardship

It all sounded too good to be true, but I decided to give the methods a fair test. Right from the start my former figure and energy began to return. The very first week I reduced my weight by a pound each day. Not the slightest hardship was involved—a most unusual thing in weight-reduction. I had always enjoyed my meals, but now my food tasted even more delicious than ever. Working became a pleasure to me again. Instead of a grind, I was bubbling over with life and energy. My flesh grew hard and firm. And soon, very much to my surprise, I was able to wear fabrics and colors which my stoutness had forced me to abandon.

A Famous Scientist's Greatest Work

When I now look upon my former condition of stoutness it all seems like a horrible nightmare, for not only did I quickly regain my normal weight, but I've maintained it ever since. To look at me today no one would realize that not so long I was a "fat" woman. My quick reduction in weight, my vigorous health and active mind of today I owe all to Eugene Christian. I

only wish I had the means to distribute his remarkable Course to every woman afflicted with obesity, for I feel that Eugene Christian is rendering a great and genuine service to humanity through his wonderful work. I have recommended Eugene Christian's Course to many others and have had the satisfaction of seeing it produce results just as remarkable as in my case.

How You Can Try This Method Without Risking a Penny

Much could be written about the cause and the remedy for excessive stoutness and Eugene Christian's methods. But that is unnecessary: for you can now test them out in the privacy of your home without risking a penny. These methods are not new and untried theories, for more than 200,000 people in all walks of life have used and are using them and endorse them in the most enthusiastic terms.

The publishers have left on hand just 1,296 sets of Eugene Christian's Course, which they wish to dispose of before the New Edition comes off the press. The price at which thousands of these sets have been sold is \$5. But these few remaining sets are being offered at only \$2 for as long as they last, so if you act quickly you can get these wonderful secrets at a saving of \$3.

Send No Money!

Simply put your name and address on the coupon below and mail it NOW. Give the postman only \$2 in complete payment, when the course arrives.

Look the course over carefully. Put it to the test. Weigh yourself before you start, then weigh yourself daily. Judge by results. If you don't notice a great improvement within five days after starting, send it back and your money will be refunded. You can clearly see that an offer like this could not be made unless the publishers were confident that Eugene Christian's methods will produce, remarkable results for you, as they have for thousands of others who gladly paid \$5 for the course.

But immediate action is necessary. There is no need for you to suffer from superfluous weight any longer—and remember, that special price can be held only as long as the few sets last.

Cut the coupon now and send it at once and be sure to avoid disappointment. You will surely agree that health, happiness and comfort are worth the trial. Write today.



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Corrective Eating Society.

Dept. 1204, 43 West 16th St., New York City.

You may send me, in plain wrapper, prepaid, Eugene Christian's Course, "Weight Control—the Basis of Health," in 12 lessons. I will pay the postman only \$2 on arrival. If I am not satisfied with it I have the privilege of returning it to you after a 5-day trial. It is, of course, understood that you are to refund my money (\$2) if I return the course.

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Millions of People Can Write Stories and Photoplays and Don't Know It!

THIS is the startling assertion recently made by E. B. Davison, of New York, one of the highest paid writers in the world. Is his astonishing statement true? Can it be possible there are countless thousands of people yearning to write, who really can and simply haven't found it out? Well, come to think of it, most anybody can tell a story. Why can't most anybody write a story? Why is writing supposed to be a rare gift that few possess? Isn't this only another of the Mistaken Ideas the past has handed down to us? Yesterday nobody dreamed man could fly. Today he dives like a swallow ten thousand feet above the earth and laughs down at the tiny mortal atoms of his fellow-men below! So Yesterday's "impossibility" is a reality today.

"The time will come," writes the same authority, "when millions of people will be writers—there will be countless thousands of playwrights, novelists, scenario, magazine and newspaper writers—they are coming, coming—a whole new world of them!" And do you know what these writers-to-be are doing now? Why, they are the men—armies of them—young and old, now doing mere clerical work, in offices, keeping books, selling merchandise, or even driving trucks, running elevators, street cars, waiting on tables, working at barber chairs, following the plow, or teaching schools in the rural districts, and women, young and old, by scores, now pounding typewriters, or standing behind counters, or running spindles in factories, bending over sewing machines, or doing housework. Yes—you may laugh—but these are The Writers of Tomorrow.

For writing isn't only for geniuses as most people think. Don't you believe the Creator gave you a story-writing faculty just as He did the greatest writer? Only maybe you are simply "bluffed" by the thought that you "haven't the gift." Many people are simply afraid to try. Or if they do try, and their first efforts don't satisfy, they simply give up in despair, and that ends it. They're through. They never try again. Yet, if, by some lucky chance they had first learned the simple rules of writing, and then given the imagination free rein, they might have astonished the world!

BUT two things are essential in order to become a writer. First, to learn the ordinary principles of writing. Second, to learn to exercise your faculty of Thinking. By exercising a thing you develop it. Your imagination is something like your right arm. The more you use it the stronger it gets. The principles of writing are no more complex than the principles of spelling, arithmetic, or any other simple thing that anybody knows. Writers learn to piece together a story as easily as a child sets up a miniature house with his toy blocks. It is amazingly easy after the mind grasps the simple "know-how." A little study, a little patience, a little confidence, and the thing that looks hard often turns out to be just as easy as it seemed difficult.



Miss Helene Chadwick, famous Hollywood Film Star, says: "Any man or woman who will learn this New Method of Writing ought to tell stories and plays with ease."

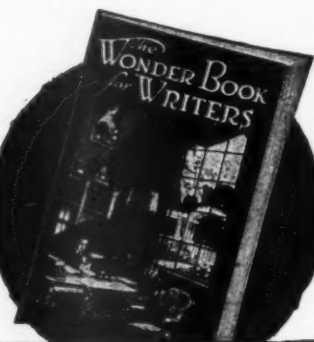
hour, every minute, in the whirling vortex—the flotsam and jetsam of Life—even in your own home, at work or play, are endless incidents for stories and plays—a wealth of material, a world of things happening. Every one of these has the seed of a story or play in it. Think! If you went to a fire, or saw an accident, you could come home and tell the folks all about it. Unconsciously you would describe it all very realistically. And if somebody you might be amazed to find your story would sound just as interesting as many you've read in magazines or seen on the screen. Now, you will naturally say, "Well, if Writing is as simple as you say it is, why can't I learn to write?" Who says you can't?

LISTEN! A wonderful FREE book has recently been written on this very subject—a book that tells all about the Irving System—a Startling New Easy Method of Writing Stories and Photoplays. This amazing book, called "The Wonder Book for Writers," shows how easy stories and plays are conceived, written, perfected and sold. How many who don't dream they can write, suddenly find it out. How the Scenario Kings and the Story Queens live and work. How bright men and women, without any special experience, learn to their own amazement that their simplest ideas may furnish brilliant plots for Plays and Stories. How one's own imagination may provide an endless gold mine of ideas that bring Happy Success and Handsome Cash Royalties. How new writers get their names into print. How to tell if you ARE a writer. How to develop your "story fancy," weave clever word-pictures and unique, thrilling realistic plots. How your friends may be your worst judges. How to avoid discouragement and the pitfalls of Failure. How to WIN!

This surprising book is ABSOLUTELY FREE. No charge. No obligation. YOUR copy is waiting for you. Write for it NOW. GET IT. IT'S YOURS. Then you can pour your whole soul into this magic new enchantment that has come into your life—story and play writing. The lure of it, the love of it, the luxury of it will fill your wasted hours and dull moments with profit and pleasure. You will have this noble, absorbing, money-making new profession! And all in your spare time, without interfering with your regular job. Who says you can't make "easy money" with your brain! Who says you can't turn your Thoughts into cash! Who says you can't make your dreams come true! Nobody knows—BUT THE BOOK WILL TELL YOU.

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"I received your Irving System some time ago. It is the most remarkable thing I have ever seen. Mr. Irving certainly has made story and play writing amazingly simple and easy."—ALFRED HORTO, NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y.

"Of all the compositions I have read on this subject, I find yours the most helpful to aspiring authors."—HAZEL SIMPSON NAYLOR, LITERARY EDITOR, MOTION PICTURE MAGAZINE.

"With this volume before him, the veriest novice should be able to build stories or photoplays that will find a ready market. The best treasure of its kind I have encountered in 24 years of newspaper and literary work."—H. PIERCE WELLES, MANAGING EDITOR, THE BIRMINGHAM PRESS.

"When I first saw your ad I was working in a shop for \$30 a week. Always having worked with my hands, I doubted my ability to make money with my brain. So it was with much skepticism that I sent for your Easy Method of Writing. When the System arrived, I carefully studied it evening after work. Within a month I had completed two plays, one of which sold for \$500, the other for \$400. I immediately say that I owe it all to the Irving System."—HELEN KINNON, ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.

Thousands of people imagine they need a fine education in order to write. Nothing is farther from the truth. Many of the greatest writers were the poorest scholars. People rarely learn to write at schools. They may get the principles there, but they really learn to write from the great, wide, open, boundless Book of Humanity! Yes, something all around you, every day, every

How I Made \$350.00 On One Short Story

And How I Learned to Write, in Only a Few Evenings, Stories That Actually Sell Themselves

EVEN as a child I wanted to write stories that people would read, and talk about, and remember. Often when vague ideas suggested themselves to me, I longed for the means of expression—I longed to put down on paper, in glowing words and phrases, the thoughts that surged up within me. Often I felt the strong desire to write about my hopes, my disappointments, my joys, my sorrows,—so that all the world would read and understand.



I Found Myself in the Office of One of the City's "Big Business" Men.

through the lack of proper training.

Yet, often, as I watched the teeming life about me, and studied the different faces I saw every day, I felt that same irresistible urge that I had felt in childhood—the impulse to write my impressions of this world and its people. I wanted to weave into fascinating stories my little daily experiences and the characters who played a part in them. Most of all I wanted to do bigger things, enter wider fields, do something really worth-while.

Are Writers Born or Made?

And so I tried to write—poems at first, then articles, then stories. But somehow I did not seem able to put down in words the thoughts and emotions that ran in rapid confusion through my mind.

What did I lack? Why couldn't I write stories in that subtle, interest-arousing way that kept one absorbed to the very end? Why couldn't I write the kind of stories that editors paid high prices for, and people read eagerly?

One day I was glancing idly through a magazine. I began to picture my name in big, black letters at the top of the page. I began to picture my story printed for thousands of people to read. It sent an inexpressible thrill through me, and looking up suddenly, I said to Dad, "Do you know, I think I can write stories."

"You! Why, my dear, you have to be born to be a writer."

Here's Proof of Your Golden Opportunity

Since taking Prof. Pitkin's course I have sold thirty-four stories, without a returned manuscript, and some forty-odd articles at satisfying prices.

Alfred Van Shrader,
New York City.

During the last year I sold two short stories and two one-act plays, thereby adding several hundred dollars to my income. Prof. Pitkin's work has been a wonderful inspiration and training to me—even though I am a very busy woman.
Mary Chalmers,
New York City.

I glanced back at the magazine in my lap. The table of contents included the names of as many women as men. Were they, then, all geniuses? Were they all "born to write"? I read some of the stories and was frankly puzzled. Here were plot-ideas so simple a child could invent them—and yet they held the interest to the very end.

Often ideas had occurred to me for stories—ideas certainly more interesting and striking than these—but I could not build up the story step by step as these authors had done. If I could

find the right words and expressions, the sympathetic touch of human nature, the correct technique—

Technique! That was what I needed! I didn't know how to begin my story. I didn't know how to introduce my characters. I didn't know how to create interesting complications and weave around the main characters tense emotional effects.

Were writers really born after all? I began to wonder—and hope.

I Do a Bit of Investigating

It seemed suddenly that all my long pent-up ambitions gave vent to an overwhelming enthusiasm. I started to read books on short story writing. I started to study the technique of plot-building, the laws of short story writing. I read all about authors, and made a thorough investigation of the different methods used by the teachers of short story writing.

I was just the least bit disappointed at first. Despite all my study, the stories I wrote failed somehow to hit the mark. After a few rejection slips I began to feel rather discouraged.

Then, one day, I came across an interesting article about Prof. Walter B. Pitkin. I found out that practically one-third of all the big writers in this country actually had studied his method which he has been following with extraordinary success for over ten years. I found out that his method of teaching short story writing is used in more than two hundred of the greatest universities and colleges in America. I found out that some of our most popular authors go to him for help and advice in working out the plots of their stories.

The article filled me with new hope. It told all about the wonderful success young writers had made, not only in the short story field, but as novelists, playwrights, editors, and writers. If these people could learn to write, I could too, I told myself firmly. Dad was wrong. Writers were made, not born.

I Sell My First Story

Of course, I could not give up my position and go to Columbia University where Prof. Pitkin teaches Journalism—but I could study his wonderful methods at home in my spare time. I sent for his course "How to Write Stories" and it has proved the most important step I ever made.

Prof. Pitkin's course is a veritable gold mine of information. It revealed to me the secret of creating interest. It taught me how to give my story that subtle touch that appeals to the editor. It taught me how to hold the readers spell-bound. Best of all it taught me how to find ideas for stories in the most trivial happenings. I know this last sounds impossible. How could anybody teach a person to find ideas? And yet he does it, and in a way that nobody would ever guess.

And so I studied Prof. Pitkin's splendid course in my spare time, and while I studied it I wrote a story based on one of its plot suggestions. I sent it to one of the biggest magazines in the country, confident that the technique was faultless, that I had woven setting, plot and characters into an absorbing narrative.

With the passing of a few days I received a check for \$350.00—a check that meant the beginning of a new life for me, a foothold on the ladder to fortune and fame.

I Now Write "Movie" Stories for Big Pay

That was the beginning. After that I found it was very easy for me to write an interesting little tale in only a few evenings—just by following Prof. Pitkin's methods. I found that I could build up a story slowly, leading up to an emotional effect that leaves the reader breathless. Editors and publishers began to write to me, asking for my short stories and offering me startling prices.

Soon I found that I had to give up my position as secretary. My writing brought me such a fine income that I felt that I must devote more time to it. A newspaper heard of me, somehow, and sent me to California to get material for a series of short stories. It seemed as though a new world had opened up for me—a world filled with pleasure, happiness and hope.

And my friends! Formerly they were indifferent, but now they were proud of me, eager to introduce me to others, as their friend. My social circle widened to a surprising degree; I found that I was wanted everywhere, that folks were always pleased and proud to have me present.

Well, now I am writing "movie" stories. I realized early that there is a very big demand for them. And the valuable information I gleaned from Prof. Pitkin's "How to Write Stories" enables me to write the kind of stories that producers actually clamor for. I usually write one or two a week, and spend the rest of my time traveling about in my car, seeking new experiences, new characters for my writing. Oh, it is a glorious life!

"How to Write Stories" By Prof. Walter B. Pitkin

I have been asked to mention here, at the end of the story that I have written in gratitude for Prof. Pitkin, that any man, woman or child who has any desire whatever to write stories, who has any ambition to succeed as I have, can have Prof. Pitkin's wonderful course on "How to Write Stories" sent to them absolutely FREE for five days.



A Newspaper Heard of Me and Sent Me to California.

Whether you believe that you can write stories or not, I would strongly advise that you send for this remarkable course. It costs you nothing to see for yourself what a splendid help it is. Each page is crowded with valuable information. From cover to cover, each book is a revelation.

Don't send any money. Just mail the coupon which has been added for your convenience, and Prof. Pitkin's course will be sent to you at once. Glance through it. Read a page here and there. Decide for yourself whether or not you want to do without it. Then, after five days, if you are thoroughly delighted send us \$5 in full payment, or return the course and you won't be out a cent. Remember, the portals of successful authorship open easily to those who have mastered the technique of short story writing. Don't delay. There is big money in the field for every one. With a little training, you too may soon be turning out stories at big prices. Mail the coupon NOW.

INDEPENDENT CORPORATION,

Dept. K-364, 319 Sixth Ave., New York

-----Free Examination Coupon-----

INDEPENDENT CORPORATION

Dept. K-364, 319 Sixth Avenue, New York

You may send me the Course or Courses checked below. Within five days after receipt I will either return the money or send you \$5 for each in full payment.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> How to Write Stories (\$5) | <input type="checkbox"/> How to Read Character |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By Prof. W. B. Pitkin | <input type="checkbox"/> By Dr. K. M. H. Blackford |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> By David M. Roth | <input type="checkbox"/> By Frederick Hook Law |
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Name

Address

.....Red Book 4-21



Premium Ham—savory, tender —for Easter Breakfast!

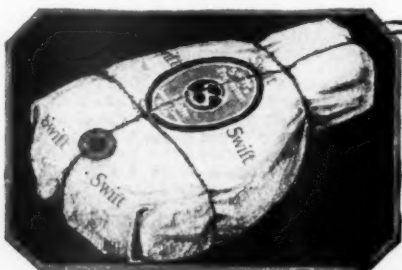
The Easter breakfast table, fragrant with flowers and the first breath of spring, requires something as unusually good to eat as a slice of Swift's Premium Ham. This exceptionally tender and savory ham requires no parboiling before broiling or frying. In a few minutes a slice can be

done to a delicate brown, crisp around the edges, yet delightfully tender.

Swift's Premium Ham requires no parboiling because its long, slow cure makes it unusually tender and mild. Its sweet and juicy flavor is preserved for you by the familiar Swift's Premium wrapper.

Swift & Company, U. S. A.

Swift's
Premium
Ham



It is not
necessary to parboil
Swift's Premium Hams
before broiling
or frying

Look for this blue tag when
you buy a whole ham or
when you buy a slice



The Time-Ball.

The reign of Louis XV ushered in countless fanciful forms of the Time-Ball, many of them elaborately beautiful. Actuated by a concealed mechanism, they were the most spectacular alarm-clocks of their day * * *

MIDNIGHT! From the lofty ceiling of a palace in France drops the mysterious Time-Ball. The revelers thrill to a sudden stop as a tall, prophetic figure raises a gleaming scythe. Through the halls of mirth rings the voice of Father Time—"Remove the masks!"

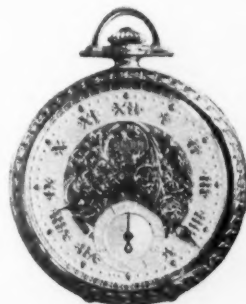
Two hundred years ago! Yet in countless cities of today, men set their watches by the drop of the Time-Ball.

Two hundred years! Yet kindly, tireless Father Time still has the call; still stands forth, as Shakespeare hailed him, "*The king of men!*"

And the dominating figure of that midnight carnival is the one outstanding personality in the watchmaking world today, the distinguished trade-mark of that long and noble line of timekeeping masterpieces—

Elgin Watches

The \$225 Corsican—an unretouched photograph * * * * *





ALICE CALHOUN

Film Play Star

Photograph Copyright by Lundberg, New York

of
Beautiful Women



WILDA BENNETT
In "Apple Blossoms"
Photo Copyright by Hixon-Cennelly, Kansas City

Art Section of



EVA NOVAK
Film Play Star

Beautiful Women



MARGUERITE ARMSTRONG
Film Play Star
Photograph by Freulich



CLAIRE MARTIN
In Vaudeville
Photograph by Lumiere, New York

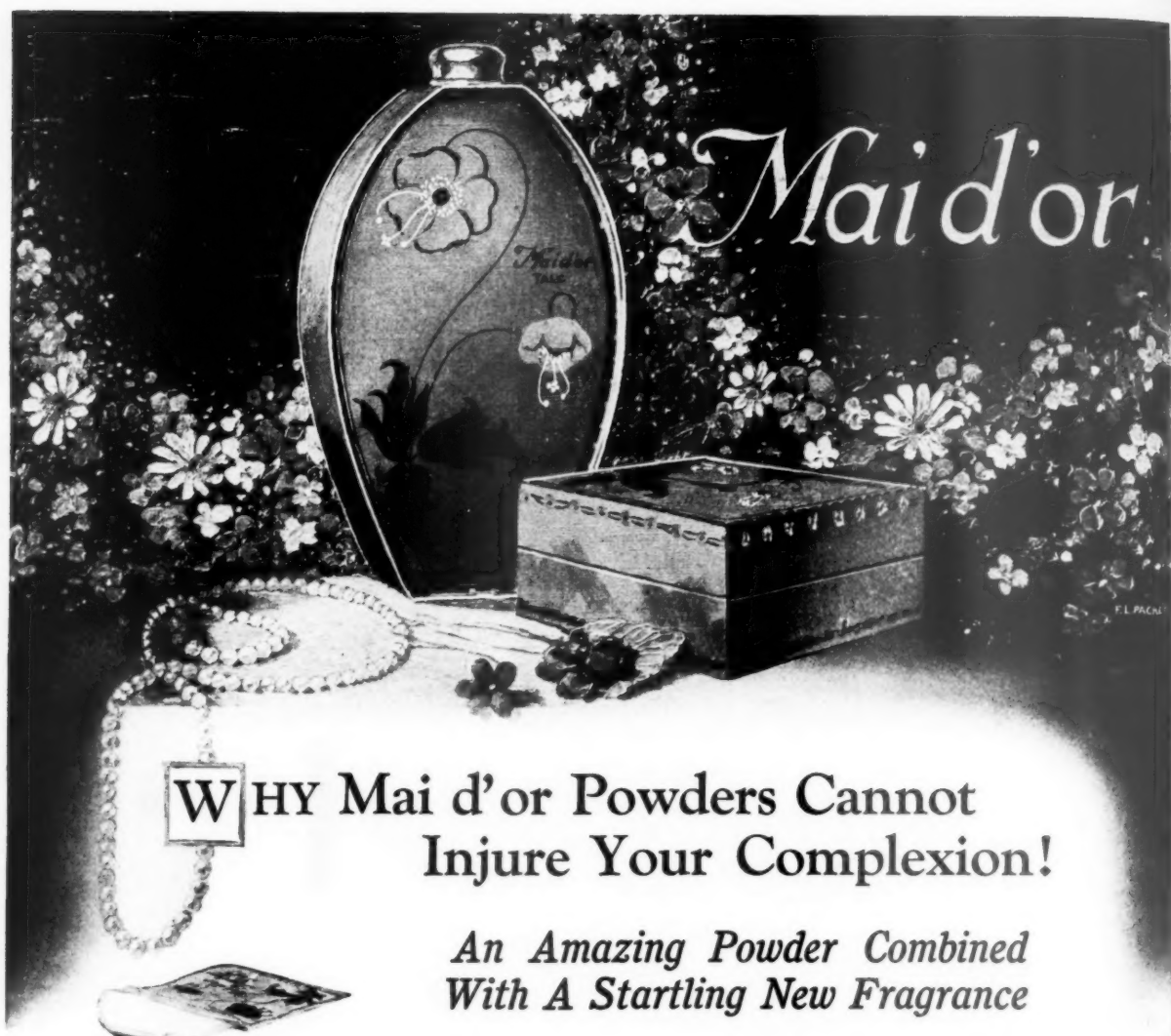
1 of
Beautiful Women



BETTY COMPSON

Film Play Star

Photo by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York



WHY Mai d'or Powders Cannot Injure Your Complexion!

An Amazing Powder Combined With A Startling New Fragrance

A New Way to Try Face Powder—

Send 10c in stamps for the new powder puff, filled with Mai d'or Face Powder.

If you desire to try the Mai d'or Perfume, a generous sample will be sent for 25c in stamps.

Address: V. Vivaudou, Inc., Times Bldg., New York City.

Powders must adhere to serve the purpose for which they are intended. Mai d'or Talc and Face Powder contain nothing to make them adhere artificially. Artificial substances too frequently injure or burn the skin.

Mai d'or Powders, like all powders made by Vivaudou, adhere because of their remarkable properties.

This is a famous Vivaudou secret—and you may be sure that when you specify

Mai d'or you are securing the finest, softest and most clinging of powders;—*guaranteed* to be harmless.

If you wish to have the flower-petal complexion, so much envied among women, insist upon Mai d'or. Your druggist or department store can supply you.

This startling new Mai d'or fragrance can be had in Face Powder, Talc, Perfume, Toilet Water, Cold Cream, Soap, Sachet, Bath Salts and Rouge.

V I V A U D O U

15 RUE ROYALE, PARIS

Mavis

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Lady Mary

The Magazine of a Remade World

What Are You — Paleozoic or Mesozoic?

A Common-sense Editorial by BRUCE BARTON

THE other afternoon I met six pessimists in succession; and at the close of a rainy day I said to myself: "I better get away from here — a couple of hundred years away." So I picked up Pepys' Diary.

Before I had read half a dozen pages, I was startled. Except for the quaint English, and the mention of such antique curiosities as kings, queens, dukes and lords, Pepys might have been writing yesterday instead of more than two hundred years ago.

He said that Parliament was about to investigate the department of the government where he worked, and he was very worried. He said the nation was in a bad way, business depressed and men concerned about their taxes. And on November 26, 1666, he made this intensely human entry:

"Into the House of Parliament where . . . I met . . . with my cozen Roger Pepys, the first time I have spoke with him this Parliament. Roger bade me help him to some good rich widow; for he is resolved to go and retire wholly into the country, for he says he is confident *we shall all be ruined very speedily by what he sees in the state.*"

"We shall all be ruined very speedily!" Pick up the history of any generation since the world began, and you find that half the members of that generation went through life expecting ruin to be visited upon them at any minute.

And the number of such folks today is larger than ever before, because there are more people.

H. G. Wells, in that remarkable "Outline of History" just published, tells of the Paleozoic

period, when all life existed only in the warm water of swamps. He says that a visitor to the world in those days would have concluded that "life was absolutely confined to the water, and that it could never spread over the land."

Doubtless the tadpoles and reptiles of that swampy era were greatly concerned when they saw some of their number crawling out, and growing legs and learning to live in the air. Such fools would certainly come to some bad end. Far better to let well enough alone. Life could never be any better than it had been; indeed, the indications were that it was going to get steadily worse.

Nevertheless the hardy, hopeful ones crawled out, and laid the foundations of the Mesozoic period and of all progress since — while the Paleozoics stayed behind and stewed in their warm water and fears.

THERE are just two classes of us: the Paleozoics, who think we are going to be lucky if things don't get worse; and the Mesozoics, who push ahead, assuming that a better future lies beyond — the believers and the fearers, the Roger Pepyses who ask for nothing but a good warm cyclone-cellar to crawl into.

By birth or training, or the state of your liver, you are in one class or the other and probably cannot be changed. But if you're a Paleozoic, don't expect us Mesozoics to grow gray-haired listening to your prophecies of ruin. The world has been trembling on the verge of destruction ever since the very first day.

And up to the minute of going to press the crash was still coming, but had not arrived.

Another of Bruce Barton's Common-sense Editorials will appear on this page in the next issue of the Red Book Magazine.



The white silk blouse from which this photograph was made, and statement of original owner are on file in the offices of The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.

This silk blouse was photographed
after 100 washings

*—not even a break
in the cuff*

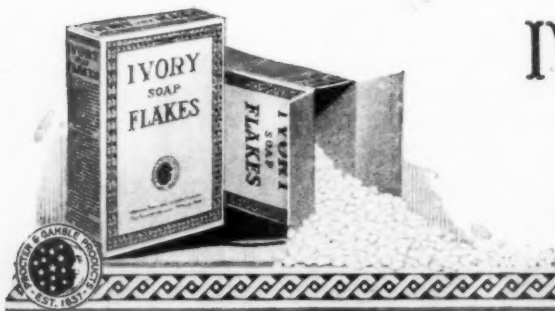
This white silk crepe de chine blouse has been worn continually and washed whenever necessary. No special care has been taken of it. After 100 washings with Ivory Soap Flakes it is as good as new—has not even a break in the cuff.

This and many other similar examples of continual washing show that Ivory Flakes would enable you not only to wash your delicate clothes without rubbing, but,—most important—that it would not harm them *even gradually*. When you use Ivory Flakes, you *know* that the garment will be as pretty after *repeated* washings as after the first.

Ivory Flakes is absolutely safe because it is genuine Ivory Soap. It differs only in form, the snow-like flakes enabling you to make such thick suds instantly that no rubbing is needed.

Why not try Ivory Flakes at our expense?

Send for free sample package and booklet of simple instructions for the care of delicate garments. Address Section 28-DF, Department of Home Economics, The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.



IVORY SOAP FLAKES

*Cannot harm the finest fabrics even gradually.
Makes pretty clothes last longer.*

APRIL, 1921
Vol. XXXVI, Number 6

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN
Editor



THE Public Library Board of Sunbury held its meetings in the office that opened off the rear of the book-stacks. Here were assembled, on a certain evening in autumn after the closing of the outer doors at nine o'clock, the gentlemen and ladies of that body. Mr. Overton, of the bank, was there; his hair was white now, his manner utterly calm. Mrs. William B. Snow, a well-preserved elderly lady, with views regarding proper reading for the young, sat beside young Mr. David MacLouden, whose financial gift reached always toward funds for the new building. Miss Wombast, librarian for thirty years, being ill at this time, her place at the secretary's desk was occupied by her assistant, Miss Henrietta Brown.

Mr. Elberforce Jenkins presided, a tall, quiet man of perhaps forty-five, who had inherited considerable wealth and made a great deal more as the junior partner of an investment banking house in Chicago—a man of dignity and standing, a widower, and a backer of the Chicago opera. He drove imported automobiles, and maintained a ranch in California. His executive capacity was prized in Sunbury affairs.

Quietly, with a composure that was in itself the flower of local culture,—Sunbury prided itself on its conservatism,—Mr. Jenkins disposed of the business of the meeting; and after a few decorously friendly words, the members of the board set out for their various homes.

Mr. Jenkins lingered a moment by the outer

railing to say to little Miss Brown, courteously, impersonally:

"You understand, Miss Brown, that you have been authorized to have the new shelves installed without waiting on Miss Wombast."

"I will attend to it in the morning, Mr. Jenkins."

With a casual nod, he then went out.

No man had ever given Miss Brown more than a casual nod.

Left alone, she deftly tidied up the desk, then moved about with quick, birdlike steps, replacing books and switching off the lights. She was thin, brisk, colorless. During her residence of seven or eight years in Sunbury she had come to be accepted as useful on committees and as secretary of the Choral Society; but no one ever saw her at a dance or walking with a man. In age she might have been under or over thirty, but must have looked an old maid at twenty. She never talked—never, despite an habitual tension about the thin, prim mouth and a nervously alert brightness in the nearly black eyes, exhibited emotion; she gave out, as we say, nothing, had no personal magnetism.

She tripped briskly along Simpson Street to the rented house beyond the tracks that she spoke of as "home." Here lived her married sister, Mrs. George C. Battie, younger than Miss Brown, faded and tired from the demands of three young children and unending house-work.

Mrs. Battie sat under the parlor light darning stockings. Overhead two of the children were crying vigorously, angrily.

"What's the matter with them?" asked Miss Brown, from the doorway.

THE GARAGE OF ENCHANTMENT

By
SAMUEL
MERWIN

Illustrated by
W. B. KING

Her sister sighed. "George always says that if I don't let them cry it out, we'll never have any discipline here. . . . What are you going to do?"

"Going out to the study."

"I wish you'd stay and talk to me. Maybe you think it doesn't get on my nerves too—with George staying in town this way, evenings, and all the worries. You know George isn't himself. He has those pains in his side. Sometimes I wonder what's to become of us, with business in such a slump and everything. . . . What do you do out there, anyway—all alone? Sometimes it seems as if we don't know you at all."

"You know I can't work in here."

"But if it's work you're doing, why don't we see results from it once in a while? And what kind of work needs a talking-machine playing fox-trots? Have you supposed, all these years, we couldn't hear it—and wonder a little? George has spoken of it, more than once. Seems to me that you're—"

"You'd better go to bed, Mary," said Miss Brown quietly. "You're evidently worn out. The music helps me with my work."

"But how can you get any writing done, when you're all the time getting up to change needles and wind it? And it's so late—a quarter to ten."

"I don't care to discuss it," said Miss Brown rather sharply; and she went out through the kitchen into the back yard. . . .

As the Batties had no automobile, Miss Brown had made over the small garage at the rear into a simple den, with a good board floor, desk and chair, bookcases, an old-fashioned round stove, a screened-off closet, and an inexpensive rug that was tacked to the floor.

She let herself in with a key, and bolted the door behind her, then made her familiar way through the dark to the desk and switched on the drop-light there. A soft radiance shone on the desk, with its neat piles of papers and reference books, and spread pleasantly over the rug, leaving walls and ceiling in shadow. She moved about drawing down the window-shades, and put a little coal on the fire. Opening a drawer, she took a pair of black-rimmed spectacles from a case and put them on. Next she sank into the desk-chair, drew toward her one of the piles of papers and fingered it.

But her eyes lifted to the cheap talking-machine that stood on a small table between the bookcases; then they strayed to the door—for a moment she seemed to be listening. A flush crept high on her thin cheeks. The nervous eyes burned with an inner fire. Her quick fingers tapped the desk. She spread out a few of the papers, looked intently at them, knitting her brows; then with a determined little shake of the shoulders, she replaced them on the pile and pushed that back to its place. The spectacles she restored to their case.

Then, more than ever flushed and bright of eye, pausing only to glance about at the window-shades, she disappeared behind the screen in the corner. Five minutes later she stepped deliberately out, attired in a light shirtwaist and gymnasium bloomers, her feet bare. And now it was evident that this little woman who knew nothing of smart ways or smart clothes, who was a nonentity on the street, had the divine gift of grace.

Once again she inspected the window-shades. Then she moved slowly, rather lazily, about the rug, flexing her muscles—drawing



Impatient to begin, she cried: "Oh, play anything!" Shaking

her thin arms sinuously up over her head and lowering them, rising on tiptoe and swinging first one leg and then the other in a smooth, wide arc. She stood, next, with feet a little apart, lifted her arms and bent very slowly backward until her hands touched the floor, then ran lightly on hands and feet in a circle as wide as the rug.

Next Miss Brown turned a handspring, as neatly and lightly as the most expert acrobat; then another; then a rapid series. She laid a sheet of note-paper on the rug, stood on it, and threw a backward somersault, alighting squarely on the paper. She amused herself next with a few dance steps of an intricate pattern and rhythm. Walking to a point between the desk and the nearer bookcase, she clasped her hands over her head, then raised one foot, nimbly picked up a pamphlet with her toes—and turning with an easy, sure balance, laid it on top of the bookcase. . . . From the matchbox on the other bookcase she drew out one match between the large and the second toes—still with her hands clasped tightly over her head—and struck it on the stove—then lifted it before her face, blew it out and tossed it into the coal scuttle.

By Samuel Merwin



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There were occasional crudenesses in the transitions from step to step and posture to posture, but her quick intelligence and the amazingly alert activity of her quaint little body covered these, actually converted them into character and color. . . . As her breath came more quickly and her bright cheeks and sparkling eyes told of the happiness she found in this perfect physical freedom, her thin face took on a degree of elfin beauty. . . . She danced a Strauss waltz, then one of the fox-trots her sister had complained of—this latter a grotesque, made up of bounding jerky steps and lightning spins and pirouettes.

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Some day, she reflected, as she stared grimly at the redly glowing squares of mica in the stove door, they would find her out.

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more than a mediocre talent for business, now caught in the tangle of underproduction and general financial confusion that followed the war, when nation-wide unemployment succeeded an uncontrollable high-tide of wages, gave out. The pains in his side and back proved a symptom of acute kidney trouble. Finally they carried him to a cot in the public ward of the Sunbury hospital. His wife, complaining always, really worn to a shadow, struggled weakly against a rising wave of debt. Her sister Henrietta dipped into her slender savings-account to help with milkman and grocer, and then took to selling her small Liberty Bonds, one by one, at a ten- to fifteen-percent loss. Life, it appeared, was closing in about them all, as life will.

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Late in October the incomparable Loupova appeared in Chicago. Miss Brown devoted her secret energies for weeks to planning an afternoon off. The result was an explosion in her life. On a Wednesday!

DURING the dancing, sitting alone in a front seat of the gallery, her spirit soared to the heavens as the exquisite little dancer floated about and (it seemed) above the stage. To the soft lighting and the oddly beautiful Russian scenery, to the atmosphere of an exotically bewitching art, her starved nature opened and responded like that of an eager child. And like an eager child she lost her self-consciousness in an illusion that enveloped her and illuminated all that was real in her curiously dual life. She found herself going, like one in a dream, up a littered alley and knocking at a stage door.

Dreamily persistent, asking and waiting and asking again, Miss Brown found herself at length in the presence of two men—men who were fat and rough, and wore their hats tipped back, and neglected to remove their cigars when they spoke. That they were rude to the borders of hostility seemed wonderfully not to matter.

She heard her own voice insisting on an opportunity to exhibit her skill. They had to consent. Otherwise she would have had to insist further. The thing couldn't stop now. It was Destiny. It was what life had been really about all these years. . . . At half-past seven they would see her; here on the dim, wonderful stage!

She caught the five-forty out to Sunbury, threw her dancing costume into a handbag, and with a demure excuse to her self-absorbed sister, caught the six-thirty back to town.

For a miserable hour she waited about the stage door, but the men did not come; the doorman mercifully let her inside then; and still she waited.

From a shadowy corner she watched Loupova as that greatest of dancers exercised back-stage; and there Miss Brown listened to the rolling waves of applause that greeted the Russian beyond the wings.

Later the two men were there; she saw them, still smoking cigars; and without a self-conscious thought, carrying her handbag, she presented herself before them. It was arranged then, grudgingly, that she should dance after the performance. With a terrified thought of the latest train home, she fell in with this plan. She was given a dressing-room, where at once she prepared herself, and then, in an agony of desire for she knew not what, waited.

A languid young man sat at a piano. He couldn't play the "Marche Miniature." Impatient to begin, she cried then: "Oh, play anything—a waltz—a fox-trot!" And the fat men exchanged glances.

Shaking with fright, she ventured on a few tentative steps. These stirred her confidence. She bent over, stretched her arms, picked and leaped; then, hardly aware of what she was doing, but in a fever to do it with all her might, she danced.

They talked excitedly afterward. The fatter man patted her shoulder. The languid pianist addressed her as "My dear!" The slender woman in the coat of real Russian sables, who had applauded, proved to be Loupova herself.

"But just what is it you want?" asked the less fat man. "I can't very well take you into my company."

Miss Brown was silent. For the first time this evening she was uncomfortably aware of her unconventional costume.

"How about this?" It was the fatter man speaking. He was, it transpired, a Mr. Gentle. "I can get you vaudeville bookings in a minute. I'll pay you well—what do you say to two hundred and a half?"

"Two hundred and a half?"

"Two-fifty a week. And your railroad fares and hotel rooms. And a maid, if you want one. What's your name?"

"Oh, I couldn't tell you that! I—I don't know that I could appear in public. I couldn't let people see me—" Miss Brown was now in utter confusion.

"But what's it all about, then? What did you come here for?"

"Perhaps—if I could wear a mask, or something of that sort—I couldn't let them see my face. And if I could get away—"

Doubtless they thought her crazy. She weakly asked herself if she were. Her temples were hot. She felt that she must run off, hide, scream. That last train to Sunbury—

ON Saturday evening Mr. Jenkins looked in at the public library to see if the new shelves had been installed. Miss Brown, who had planned grimly to call at his home on Sunday, asked for a word with him.

"I've been wondering how to tell you this, Mr. Jenkins—" she began.

"Nothing unpleasant has happened, I trust," said he with the composure that had apparently never been ruffled, looking down at her with an impersonally gracious sort of kindness.

"Oh, no, Mr. Jenkins! And now that Miss Wombast is better, it—You see, it has become necessary for me to earn more money. And an unexpected chance has come to me, some interesting traveling. It means a change. I'm afraid I—"

"I'm sure we shall miss you very much, Miss Brown." He spoke with a courtly precision. "But if you feel that you will better yourself by making the change, of course we would not wish to stand in your light. If you wish, I will give you a letter."

"Oh, no," she cried, "I shan't need a letter, thank you very much. It's all arranged."

To her sister, that evening, she explained:

"I'm going away tomorrow."

"Going—away?"

"It's all right, my dear. You'll have George at home again soon. I have a good position. For a while, until George gets back to work, I'll send some money every week."

"But what on earth, Henrietta! You mean—"

"I decided not to consult with you. You've had enough on your mind."

"But where are you going?"

"Traveling."

"Where?"

"All around the country. You needn't get dramatic about it. It's all right."

"But what is the job?"

"Oh—secretary. And companion."

"Who to? Henrietta, it seems to me—if you're—"

"Now, do be quiet. Do you think I'm not old enough to take care of myself? I appreciate the compliment."

"But you haven't even told me who it is! Or where you'll be! Aren't we even to have an address? It seems to me that you're—"

"Silly, I told you I would be traveling! Of course I'll send you addresses from time to time."

"It sounds fishy to me, if you want to know—"

"Really, I don't want to know!"

"But—who—is—this—woman?"

Miss Brown swallowed down a lump that rose in her throat.

"It's—it's Madame Loupova," she said, and turned white.

"Madame Lou—What—who on earth?"

"The Russian dancer. She's really a very dignified person—a great artist."

FIVE weeks later George C. Battie called up Mr. Elberforce Jenkins at his home on Lower Chestnut Avenue and asked if he might come to discuss an exceedingly important matter.

George C. was thin and subdued after many weeks in hospital. His suit was worn to a smooth luster on elbows and back. He was the sort of insignificant figure you see occasionally on early and late suburban trains and promptly forget.

"It's about my sister-in-law, Miss Henrietta Brown," explained this person, seated in Mr. Jenkins' spacious living-room and lighting one of Mr. Jenkins' cigars without pausing to remove the gold-and-red band.

"Oh, indeed? No trouble, I trust," murmured Mr. Jenkins, exhibiting a mildly polite interest.

"I have come to you because there's really no one else I can talk with—freely, that is. We need advice. My wife is beside herself with worry."

"You are quite right in coming to me, Mr.—Battie."

"And of course she worked so long in the library—"

George C. felt that he should get to the point more quickly. For Mr. Jenkins, despite his outer show of courtesy, did look slightly surprised. He was a swell, of course—very reserved. Probably it was a mistake, rushing around here like this. If the wife hadn't insisted, fairly goaded him— But there was no backing out now. Accordingly George C. plunged into his story.

"My sister-in-law gave up her work in the library last month, Mr. Jenkins—"

"Yes, I remember. She spoke to me. We were sorry to have her go. I offered her a letter, but—"

"First, then, let me ask you—did she tell you what she was planning to do?"

"No, I believe she spoke of an unexpected opportunity that had come up. Some interesting traveling."

"Exactly!" George C. spoke with a nervous emphasis, as one

who feels himself in the center of a stirring drama. "Now, what would you think if I were to tell you that she left us in the dark, too—her sister and brother."

"Really! Indeed!"

"Fact! She—she even misled us."

"Really, you astonish me!"

"Don't I, though! We—my wife and I—couldn't have been more astonished if you yourself, Mr. Jenkins—" he hesitated.

"Miss Brown has always been so quiet and conscientious," observed that gentleman somewhat hurriedly.

"Exactly! That's what I was just going to say. If you yourself, after all these years of conservative living, should—"

Mr. Jenkins interrupted him:

"Has she—disappeared?"

"Worse than that!"

"No!"

"Yes!" George C. was beginning to enjoy the situation. "First I should tell you—you see, we never fully realized it until after the blow fell—but there has always been a side of Henrietta's nature that we couldn't quite get at. She was so quiet. And there was something queer about the evenings she spent in her study—locked in, mind you, with a talking—"

"Have you any knowledge as to where she is now?"

"Yes. I'm getting at that. Her explanation was that she was going as secretary to the Russian dancer, Loupova. It sounded pretty fishy to us."

"She would make an excellent secretary," mused Mr. Jenkins. "That sort of steady, unimaginative person, accurate in small matters—"

"It's the only thing she could do, with her training. Apparently she's been trying to write for ten years, without the slightest visible result. Well, she's been very good about it in one way. My—my own affairs have had something of a setback—through a serious illness—"

"I'm sure I'm sorry to hear that."

"And—this is rather personal; you won't mention it? She has sent money to her sister every week—so much money, indeed, that it's been rather difficult for us to—"

"Hm'm! The problem, of course, can have no such serious aspect as it might have if she were an attractive and impressionable young woman."

"Well—hm'm!" George C. compressed his lips. "Let me lay this before you." He drew a folded page of a newspaper from a breast pocket. "Every week she has written us her address for the following week—but always 'General Delivery' in a new city.

You can't blame us for thinking it queer. For instance, she was in Minneapolis last week, and St. Paul the week before, and Kansas City before that. This week she's in Milwaukee."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. And now look at this. It's from the New York Times of Sunday." George C., not without a spacious gesture, spread out the newspaper page. "Dramatic sheet. I happened on it by the merest chance—I was sitting in a hotel lobby this noon

and found it lying in the next chair." He ran a thin finger down a column of advertisements. "Just cast your eye on that!"

Mr. Jenkins read aloud as follows:

"Manhattan Opera House—Thirty-fourth Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues. Second triumphal month—Madame Loupova and her original complete Russian ballet!"

"Well!" cried the dignified Mr. Jenkins, nearly forgetting his perfect suburban composure. "Well!"

"You get it, don't you?" George C. was saying, excitedly. "Loupova's been right there in New York! Henrietta's been fifteen hundred miles away from her, shooting all over the place! Now, I ask you, what does that do to Henrietta's little story?"

"It's most surprising," mused Mr. Jenkins. "Really astonishing! Just what did you wish me to do about it, Mr. Battie?"

"Well—it's a little hard to say; but you see, here are you and I, the only men who've had any interest in her. You were, in a way, her employer. There's no telling what kind of scrape she's got herself into—"

Mr. Jenkins brought a firm hand down on the arm of his chair.

"The simple thing is to go right up there to Milwaukee and find her."

"Yes. That's the thing!"

"Then if you can take tomorrow off, I should be glad to drive you up there. We will see what we can do."

IN his account to his wife of the really dramatic little scene in the

impressive mansion on Lower Chestnut Avenue, George C. found himself making more of an impression on the tired little woman than for a number of years preceding. It seemed almost to give him a standing. He was glad that he had gone. In fact, it seemed now to have been his idea from the first.

No Miss Henrietta Brown was registered or known at any of the principal hotels of Milwaukee. At the General Delivery window in the central post office no information could be had.

"What it comes down to," said Mr. Jenkins finally as they sat over a late luncheon, "is to stay down there in the post office awhile and watch."

A difficulty was that George C., who had no fur coat, had felt the cold during the long ride up, and was now sneezing. Mr. Jenkins sent him home on an afternoon train; and being a man accustomed to putting things through, (Continued on page 102)



THE FAITH OF HOLY JOE

By HAROLD
TITUS

Illustrated by
WILLIAM
MEADE
PRINCE



He floated beside the stick all night, knowing that everything would come out all right if he just had patience.

watched him crawling about Charlevoix, kept alive by charity, and physically helpless to continue sailing,—the only productive effort of which he had ever been capable,—it seemed as if this great faith in the final goodness of things were a negligible possession. Yet to Joe it was not; it was all that really mattered!

Not, of course, that Joe's misfortunes had failed to impress him! He had suffered much and had every reason to abandon his optimism; but faith is not founded on reason alone, and despite the fact that the balance-sheet of his life had been written almost entirely in red, Joe's belief in the last rightness of Providence was as firm as it ever had been.

The name—Holy Joe—has a mouth-filling sound and suggests a mighty, fiery man, a crusader and a valiant combatant of evil. But actually Joe was very mild, as mild in manner as his gray eyes, and his devotions did not quite take an orthodox course. He was seldom seen in church; he rarely spoke of the more obvious phases of his belief; he was never known to rebuke a man for sinning; but on the other hand, he never cursed, never lied and never did an unkind

or an unfair act.

To his faith he made but one qualification: to expect kindness from the Almighty, a man must do the right thing himself. This, then, is the tale of how Joe was tempted to do the wrong thing, tempted until it was all that his old heart could withstand.

The name of Holy Joe followed the man to the Great Lakes from salt water, where he had sailed before the mast when a mere lad. It had been given him for his unswerving belief in the eternal rightness of an individual's fate, if the person only plays fair with the Power that rules his destiny—for that and his mildness, his moderation and his reverence.

His experience on the salt seas, moreover, had done much to

THE only thing left to Holy Joe Jessup was his belief that things would come out all right.

Perhaps it would be better to set it down thus:

The great thing that Holy Joe Jessup possessed was his belief that things would come out all right.

Surely, this would have been Joe's own manner of emphasis.

An observer would be inclined toward the former, however, because of the low tide to which Holy Joe's fortunes had ebbed. One thing after another had been taken from him—his son, his trade, his boat, his strength, his ability to labor even enough for his own meager sustenance, his hope—the latter, at least, in so far as sufficient foundation for hope went. To those who knew him and

justify that faith. When in the *Silver Cross* he watched her rigging carried away and her hull battered by the furies off the Horn, and the crew set about stepping a jury-rig to get back the fourteen hundred miles to Valparaiso for repairs, Joe was the only one who believed everything would turn out all right. And it did. Again, when at the end of the first dog-watch on the *Polar Star* he went out to readjust a misplaced whisker-boom, and a faulty eye-bolt let him down into the Mediterranean, he floated beside the stick all that night and until the sun had been up a good two hours while his ship searched for him, knowing that everything would come out all right if he just kept patience. It did. Another time, when the awkward steam-and-sail *Maid of Orleans* (Liverpool to Boston) was driven far to the northward, her fires drowned, her foremast carried away, by the weight of ice upon it, Joe kept the frozen, starved, waterless crew on the job while they worked her into Halifax. He was sure "it would come out all right," even when the older men proved by the soundings in her hold that the ship could not last. Joe waved aside their arguments and—one of his rare references to Scriptures—cited the truth that the Lord helps those who help themselves and kept them going until they *did* make Halifax—just. She went down before they could tie her up; so the skeptics were right after all; but Joe had been right, no less, and that satisfied him.

Joe had never had much luck, but it seemed that when he came to fresh water even the little luck that had kept him tolerably satisfied and had enabled him to retain with ease his faith in Providence, deserted him.

As happens frequently, it was a woman. He was in Quebec

waiting to sign on when he met Anne Guimont, who was from Buffalo, visiting a cousin. Joe did not go to sea again, but married Anne and went with her to Buffalo, where he shipped on a lumber schooner and set up a modest home ashore and was heckled sadly by his wife, who turned out to be a shrew of remarkable shrewishness. But Joe knew that it would turn out all right; and it did, for a son was born. Anne died two years later, quickly and painlessly, and Joe was honestly relieved, for he felt that she had never been happy in this world. Moreover he was sure that little Charley never would have been happy with her; neither would Holy Joe have been happy himself.

Fatherhood spurred Joe's ambitions. From his frugality he managed to save a little money above the expenses of his boy on shore, and when Charley was fourteen, Holy Joe bought a little windjammer and the twain came into lower Lake Michigan (which, as you look at a map, is upper Lake Michigan) and began wild-cattling around for a living and happiness.

Holy Joe set great store by Charley. He was "getting on" himself and would not be able to sail much longer; he dreamed of giving his boy a start and living ashore before long in a cottage with the wife and children Charley would likely have. Charley, however, was frankly no good—decidedly no good. Joe did not shrink from realization of this when it was finally forced upon him, but he did refuse to blame the boy, because he knew the shortcomings were the heritage from a truculent mother, and besides, he was confident that Charley would turn out all right if he—Joe—only did the right thing by him, which was to have patience and faith, to help the boy succeed.



"Why, you old liar, I don't believe you have enough to eat."

And for six long years Holy Joe *had* patience and faith. The boy was bright and capable, but in him was a stupid streak which would not let him assume ordinary importance in the eyes of people whose judgment was sound; and when, just turned twenty, he declared that he was through with that sort of thing and set out for Detroit and a factory job, his father was forced to summon all the faith in his aging heart to believe in Charley.

LONELINESS after the boy's departure was extreme. Holy Joe kept on sailing the old *Flora Belle*, which looked more like the gable of a house than a schooner, losing money with every trading venture and losing cargoes for those who trusted him to transport them; but when the few people who had sympathy for him tried to show it, he only declared that his luck had been a little bad, but that it was bound to turn sooner or later and come out all right in the end. . . .

At first Joe had an occasional letter from Charley and heard rumors of him. The boy, it was reported, was drinking considerably, which worried his father a great deal. He did the right thing, however, and helped vote Michigan dry and had the satisfaction that came from thinking that now Charley would not be tempted. When, later, the nation outlawed alcohol, he rejoiced to think that he had helped pave the way for what was, to him, a glorious event.

It was during the third summer of his loneliness that temptation made its strident first entry into Joe's life. He had been tempted before, of course, but never strongly. He was losing strength; it was more difficult nowadays to keep going; helplessness and want were always at his side. He was sailing the *Flora Belle* alone (he was much of the time alone now, because it saved the expense of a helper) from Grand Traverse Bay to Petoskey, and just off Fisherman Island was becalmed. He sat on the one hatch, staring out into the crimson sunset, remembering that unless he could make Petoskey before morning, the cargo which he was after would be turned over to another, when a floating object some distance out in the lake attracted him. It looked like a cask, and for want of something better to do, Joe went out in the skiff to investigate.

It was a barrel, floating low, and filled with something. Joe sculled up to it and perceived stenciled lettering on the head. He stooped and in the late sunlight read:

Haines Distillery.
Old Rooster.

Besides, there were serial numbers and symbols which he did not understand. He rolled the cask over and over in the water. Not a sign of its having been opened; and tales that he had heard of deckhands on steamboats selling liquor at fabulous prices recurred to his puzzled brain.

This was a barrel of whisky. . . . A barrel of whisky!

As he stood there in his skiff, the words assumed alarming importance. *A barrel of whisky!*

Joe sat down weakly. A single barrel of whisky like this was worth the total value of the *Flora Belle*!

The thought processes which followed in Holy Joe's mind were strange indeed. Never before had he deliberately fooled himself, but now he did. He hated whisky, in his mild way. Had he not voted it out of Michigan? Had not his heart lifted in thanksgiving when the nation "went dry?"

And yet instead of knocking in the head or even letting the barrel drift aimlessly on, Joe towed it ashore. He carried driftwood and built a track and worked the barrel up into some bushes. Afterward he was careful to let the branches fall naturally into place. He scattered the poles that had aided him and stood, the task accomplished, panting under the first stars. Then he turned back to his skiff.

"Now, nobody'll be tempted by the stuff!" he muttered.

Ah, no one but Holy Joe!

He did not go back to the cache. Next day, still becalmed, with his prospective cargo surely transferred by now to another, he reasoned that he had just landed the whisky for want of something better to do, and that he would never return to it.

That afternoon he got under way again and spent a week looking for such service as his schooner might render. That was his life nowadays. Then, with October, came a snow-laden gale which smothered him as he passed White Shoals Light and later put the *Flora Belle* on the rocks to the south of Hog Island, where she smashed to matchwood in an hour. Holy Joe managed to get himself ashore, but his right ankle was broken, and he was almost dead when fishermen from St. James saw his shirt hoisted

for a distress signal. When they proclaimed their amazement at his still being alive, Joe said that was not remarkable; he had had faith that everything would turn out all right. And everything did.

So, boat gone, vigor gone, his foot in a cast, he sat through that long, cold winter in Charlevoix with his optimism almost his only company. Charley, advised of this ill fortune, sent him some money, and this made the old man very happy indeed; but soon the money stopped coming, and as the months sped on and he came to listen with less skepticism to the doctor's pronouncement that his foot would never be the same, a melancholy came to find place in his eyes. Though it never reached his voice or his conscious thought, it was there, making itself secure, undermining his faith, biding that time when it could batter down the last buttress of his belief in the reward of right-doing, and make of him a crabbed, protesting old man.

People were sorry for Holy Joe. Dan Hogan, the boat-builder, for one, found a place for him above his shop where there was a cot and a stove. Mrs. Hogan saw that the old fellow did not want for food, and when spring came and the epidemic of 'long-shore' thieving commenced, Dan paid Holy Joe three dollars a week to sleep days and sit up nights to see that the fittings of yachts and power-boats at his anchorage were not disturbed. Then the old man, after a manner, became again self-supporting. At least, so he assured Dan, with the further commentary that he knew things would turn out all right.

The thieving that summer was actual and persistent and of consequence. Furthermore, people were satisfied as to the identity of the individual, but the one they suspected, Tommy Blue, was as slippery a thief as ever coveted his neighbor's property. Tommy had been about the lakes all his life, working at many things, but always suspected of being light-fingered—dogged forever by sheriffs and underwriters, but always bland and plausible. He owned a heavy gasoline boat of the cabin-cruiser type which could live in any sea and in which he would disappear for days at a time, but always coming back close-mouthed and smiling and friendly. Later it would be discovered that quantities of brass were missing from the machinery of some boat aground, or some other loss by theft of marine property would be reported. He would be watched and followed but never could anything be laid directly on his door-step.

It was when Tommy first came to gossip with Holy Joe that Hogan made arrangements to keep that optimistic old eye open during darkness. Now, it may have been that Tommy Blue did have designs on the craft about Hogan's place, and again he may have come for a more worthy reason, because he kept on coming and would often sit the whole night out with Joe, talking, talking, talking. It tended to make the old man much more light-hearted than he had been when he sat there all by himself, trying to keep from brooding over his poverty and Charley's indifference and his own helplessness. Also, Tommy never made a crooked move.

They came thus to be almost cronies, for Tommy did not treat Holy Joe as other young men did; he asked him serious questions and flattered him; also Tommy went so far as to divulge his part in some transactions which were beyond the law, telling of his thieving pals and of how they had stuck together, all of which convinced Joe that while he was an unscrupulous young man where property was concerned, there was one thing he held sacred—friendship.

ONE night when the moon was loafing down into the west and the boats at anchor were all shimmering with dew, Tommy fell to talking of money-making.

"You know, Joe," he said, "if a hand could only get hold of some real good whisky—"

Holy Joe started as if something had broken inside him, as if something that had been walled up and put away and consciously forgotten had been suddenly loosed. Did Tommy know of that barrel? Did he suspect? Surely not. Impossible!

"These here resorts are going round with their tongues hangin' out and all sunburned," Tommy confided. "A man could get anything he asked for good whisky. He'd get rich in a week, he would."

"But it's ag'in' the law, Tommy," Joe protested.

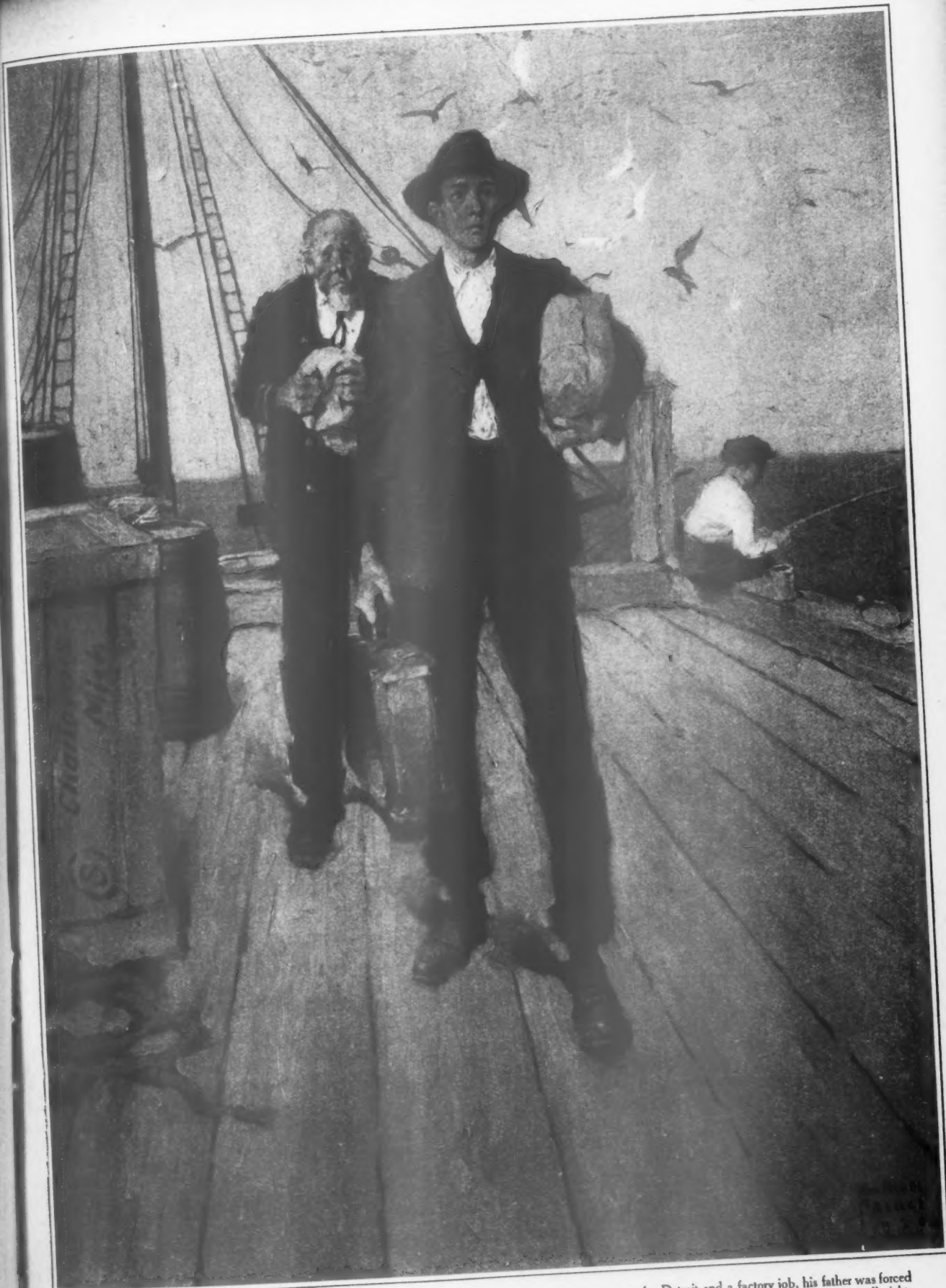
The boy nodded in affirmation.

"Sure, but—"

"And whisky makes lots of misery, too," the old man pursued.

"But there's money in it!" was Tommy's rejoinder.

And his smile was so boyish, so frank, that Holy Joe understood of a sudden that Tommy was not really immoral, but only unhampered by any sense of right or wrong. That was all.



When, just turned twenty, Charley set out for Detroit and a factory job, his father was forced to summon all the faith in his aging heart to believe that Charley would come out all right.

Thus the temptation that had been subtly planted in the old man's heart that evening in the *Flora Belle* came again to vigorous life. He had made his first misstep when he hid that barrel, and it was difficult to turn back. Never before had he given the tempter a single tentacle-hold, but once Joe had refused to put him decisively behind, the old man was in for trouble.

Joe brought the subject up himself the next evening, casually, as though he had just thought of it.

"How much could a man get for whisky, Tommy?"

"Oh, any old boot-leg stuff brings ten or twelve dollars now."

"A gallon?"

"A quart!"

Joe drew a deep sigh and started to calculate. Ten dollars a quart, four quarts to a gallon; that makes forty dollars. The barrel must—

"But these folks don't want boot-leg stuff," Tommy went on. "They'd pay more for good stuff, you bet!"

It took time and courage for Joe to speak again, because he was making up his mind to ask:

"But some good whisky, like— Aint Old Rooster good stuff?"

"Holy Smoke, Joe!" gasped Tommy. "Old Rooster? Why—but of course, there aint any of that now."

Joe was leaning forward, and his breath came shorter than ever.

"But if you *did* have it?"

Tommy squinted and deliberated.

"Now, the last Old Rooster I sold," he began in unconscious confession, "cost me seven dollars, and I got twelve for it." Joe sat back with a little whimper which Tommy Blue did not appear to notice. "Now you couldn't buy it, but if I had it here, I'd say I could tire out a strong boy just passin' it over to the needy at twenty-five dollars a quart. You know, Joe—" he went on. But Joe was not listening.

Twenty-five dollars a quart! Four quarts to a gallon; a hundred dollars a gallon. A fifty-gallon barrel. . . . He swallowed weakly. Five thousand dollars? No, that couldn't be! Four quarts to a gallon; a hundred—

"But it wouldn't be right, Tommy." He interrupted both his companion and himself. "It wouldn't be right, nohow, no matter how much a man needed the money!"

The next forenoon as Joe slept, he dreamed of being smothered under five thousand dishonest dollars. He awoke at noon and combed his fringe of hair and sparse whiskers and wished that Charley were back, living with him. He smiled wistfully as he recalled how excited he had been the night before over a thing which could not possibly be done, because it was wrong.

NOW, it happened that Dan Hogan owned a heavy old catboat which was seldom used; and toward the end of that week Joe remarked that he would like to sail her. He hadn't been on the water since fall, and it would do him good. Whereupon Dan enthusiastically urged him to sail as long and as often as he wanted to, because only that morning his wife had said that the old man looked feeble and seemed to have lost some of his cheerfulness. Dan, looking closely at his watchman, later agreed that she had been right.

So Holy Joe sailed through the piers into the lake and headed for North Point. The slight roll, the purr of water at the bow, lulled him; and for a time he thought he was happy. But something deep in his heart was evading, was impelling him to act contrary to his avowed intention of a mere little sail, and when he came about on the other tack, he was clearing South Point and standing down the shore toward Fisherman Island, knowing that the place had been his destination all along. . . .

The barrel was there. He thumped it

and got down on his creaking knees and read the lettering on his head again. That was all, save that when he started back to the harbor, he let himself dream of what he might do with five thousand dollars. It did not hurt to dream, did it? He would never be tempted to sell the stuff—never!

But after he had passed the spar-buoy and let out his sail to go in before the breeze, tears dimmed the old eyes, and a sob came from his sunken chest.

"I wisht," he said aloud, "I wisht Charley was here—an' all the things would hurry up about comin' out all right!"

Tommy Blue was gone a week, leaving mysteriously, coming back casually, but his eyes on his return had a twinkle of achievement, and his manner was more kindly than ever.

"How in hell, Joe, do you get along?" he asked the first time he revisited the old man.

"Oh, I get along. Things is high. I've tried to save a little each week for my doctor-bill, but I had to buy pants an' a shirt an' groceries costs somethin' awful."

"Why, you old liar, I don't believe you have enough to eat!"

"Oh, yes, I do. I don't need much. Of course, I don't always have enough,"—Joe could not even evade telling the truth,—"but I get along. 'Sides, things are goin' to come out all right."

Tommy tried to force money on him, but Joe would not accept. In the first place, he had some measure of pride left; and anyhow it was not honest money that Tommy proffered, he reasoned to himself, and no good could come to any man who accepted it.

"I'll get along," he repeated. "Charley'll be back after a spell. He'll get tired of the city an' come up here an' take care of me. He's a good boy at heart."

And anyone looking into Tommy Blue's face just then could have forgiven him all manner of thievery, because there were pity, a sympathy and an understanding in his expression that atoned for all his sins.

Holy Joe had admitted a truth. There were days when he did not have enough to eat. He could always manage to live, of course, could always catch perch in the harbor, and now and then Mrs. Hogan gave him things; but for a time she had been away and would be gone another month; she and her husband did not know that out of his weekly income of three dollars Joe was trying to pay his doctor-bill, or that he needed clothes and that there were days when he was hungry. Not *very* hungry, he told himself, but with a good appetite—and faith that it would be satisfied tomorrow.

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By NALBRO
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Illustrated by EDWARD RYAN

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Meanwhile Martin and Fanny, after a Riviera honeymoon, returned to assume the pleasures and privileges of Martin's wealth in America. Shortly afterward Madam Reid died.

CHAPTER VIII

DARE'S motherhood did not assert itself as she had hoped and believed it would. Her child was strangely indifferent to life, a frail little thing with great blue eyes. The camp revered her as a mascot. Little Ladyfingers they named her—but now the name intimated nothing of the contempt which Mrs. Slack had felt when rechristening Dare as Ladyfingers.

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Thus the temptation that had been subtly planted in the old man's heart that evening in the *Flora Belle* came again to vigorous life. He had made his first misstep when he hid that barrel, and it was difficult to turn back. Never before had he given the tempter a single tentacle-hold, but once Joe had refused to put him decisively behind, the old man was in for trouble.

Joe brought the subject up himself the next evening, casually, as though he had just thought of it.

"How much could a man get for whisky, Tommy?"

"Oh, any old boot-leg stuff brings ten or twelve dollars now."

"A gallon?"

"A quart!"

Joe drew a deep sigh and started to calculate. Ten dollars a quart, four quarts to a gallon; that makes forty dollars. The barrel must—

"But these folks don't want boot-leg stuff," Tommy went on. "They'd pay more for good stuff, you bet!"

It took time and courage for Joe to speak again, because he was making up his mind to ask:

"But some good whisky, like— Aint Old Rooster good stuff?"

"Holy Smoke, Joe!" gasped Tommy. "Old Rooster? Why— but of course, there aint any of that now."

Joe was leaning forward, and his breath came shorter than ever.

"But if you *did* have it?"

Tommy squinted and deliberated.

"Now, the last Old Rooster I sold," he began in unconscious confession, "cost me seven dollars, and I got twelve for it." Joe sat back with a little whimper which Tommy Blue did not appear to notice. "Now you couldn't buy it, but if I had it here, I'd say I could tire out a strong boy just passin' it over to the needy at twenty-five dollars a quart. You know, Joe—" he went on. But Joe was not listening.

Twenty-five dollars a quart! Four quarts to a gallon; a hundred dollars a gallon. A fifty-gallon barrel. . . . He swallowed weakly. Five thousand dollars? No, that couldn't be! Four quarts to a gallon; a hundred—

"But it wouldn't be right, Tommy." He interrupted both his companion and himself. "It wouldn't be right, nohow, no matter how much a man needed the money!"

The next forenoon as Joe slept, he dreamed of being smothered under five thousand dishonest dollars. He awoke at noon and combed his fringe of hair and sparse whiskers and wished that Charley were back, living with him. He smiled wistfully as he recalled how excited he had been the night before over a thing which could not possibly be done, because it was wrong.

NOW, it happened that Dan Hogan owned a heavy old catboat which was seldom used; and toward the end of that week Joe remarked that he would like to sail her. He hadn't been on the water since fall, and it would do him good. Whereupon Dan enthusiastically urged him to sail as long and as often as he wanted to, because only that morning his wife had said that the old man looked feeble and seemed to have lost some of his cheerfulness. Dan, looking closely at his watchman, later agreed that she had been right.

So Holy Joe sailed through the piers into the lake and headed for North Point. The slight roll, the purr of water at the bow, lulled him; and for a time he thought he was happy. But something deep in his heart was evading, was impelling him to act contrary to his avowed intention of a mere little sail, and when he came about on the other tack, he was clearing South Point and standing down the shore toward Fisherman Island, knowing that the place had been his destination all along. . . .

The barrel was there. He thumped it

and got down on his creaking knees and read the lettering on the head again. That was all, save that when he started back to the harbor, he let himself dream of what he might do with five thousand dollars. It did not hurt to dream, did it? He would not be tempted to sell the stuff—never!

But after he had passed the spar-buoy and let out his sail to go in before the breeze, tears dimmed the old eyes, and a sob came from his sunken chest.

"I wisht," he said aloud, "I wisht Charley was here—and all things would hurry up about comin' out all right!"

Tommy Blue was gone a week, leaving mysteriously, come back casually, but his eyes on his return had a twinkle of achievement, and his manner was more kindly than ever.

"How in hell, Joe, do you get along?" he asked the first time he revisited the old man.

"Oh, I get along. Things is high. I've tried to save a little each week for my doctor-bill, but I had to buy pants an' a shirt an' groceries costs somethin' awful."

"Why, you old liar, I don't believe you have enough to eat."

"Oh, yes, I do. I don't need much. Of course, I don't always have enough,"—Joe could not even evade telling the truth,— "I get along. 'Sides, things are goin' to come out all right."

Tommy tried to force money on him, but Joe would not accept. In the first place, he had some measure of pride left; and anyhow it was not honest money that Tommy proffered, he reasoned with himself, and no good could come to any man who accepted it.

"I'll get along," he repeated. "Charley'll be back after a spell. He'll get tired of the city an' come up here an' take care of me. He's a good boy at heart."

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woman who had ever come to dwell with mortals, and for her sake he must make a strike. But there were few strikes made about Hangtown—usually the free lancers were obliged to seek the pay-roll of the established companies, after their funds had been expended to no avail. This was what Amos had done.

The men told Jimmie, who told Dare, that occasionally Amos had a "tantrum," but he no longer gave way to temper in his home. That it should be Little Ladyfingers who brought about this reform, and not herself, hurt Dare. Yet she rejoiced, no matter who had caused it. And she still wrote flowery lies to Martin and relied on Jimmie as her "right-hand man" to tide over dull days.

Jimmie assumed much of the care of Little Ladyfingers. It made her happy to do so. Dare loved her child as one loves something one intuitively knows will not be hers for long. And while she tried to rear her, she pondered over the problem of whether Amos was, after all, a strong man with weak tendencies or simply a weak man with occasional spurts of strength. Was there any way out of the maze? Jimmie had said there was always a way out.

Amos was kind to his wife, though the old romance was now quite dead. It takes great-hearted, great-brained men and women to retain courtesy, romance and a sense of humor in such surroundings as the Larkins had succumbed to. Their romance and sense of humor were "in cold storage," as Amos himself admitted on one particularly distressing occasion.

"Anticipation is my only enjoyment," was Dare's reply.

And Dare had forgotten how to cry. She was tense, dry-eyed, with a set smile her only form of expression.

ONE October day the Emperor Horton died. Wearing some of Dare's "fixings," Jimmie filled his "standing order" and sang "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls" at his funeral, Julio the Mexican accompanying her on his guitar. It was a strange burial; half jestingly, half in sympathy, the camp tried to make it something of an affair.

"The Emperor is dead," they said. "Long live the Empress—Little Ladyfingers!" They read his will, written in his flourishing hand, with its Latin phrases incoherently interspersed with its bequests and directions.

His royal fortune, *ad lib.*, was buried seven hundred feet north-east of the Red Dog Saloon. *Hoc signo vinces!* It was over seven thousand dollars in gold—*ad captandum vulgus!* He left it, requiring neither bond nor security whatsoever, to Mrs. Sarah Owen, alias Sam Owen, the razor-paste agent whose strength of character he had long admired and whose secret his royal brain had long ago discovered.

Digging according to directions, they found the money, strangely enough, and waited, with beaming faces, until Sam Owen, tiny old soul, should come trudging back to camp. Thereupon they told her she was an heiress and she could become Mrs. Sarah Owen once more, erect a handsome monument to her boy and pursue her career of song-writer at her leisure.

It was a little after this that Dare and Amos had a sober talk. The baby was eight months old—still as indifferent to the world as when she first came into it. They had been in camp well over a year, and Amos had only made a living with Dare's money to round off the corners. They were tired, discouraged and ashamed.

"I can't get ahead here," Amos admitted bluntly.

"There is the jewelry," Dare remembered the nest-egg in trust with a guilty joy. "I can send for it—say we are going to California."

"Not yet—I've taken enough, although the money is the least of it. You look ten years older than when we came."

"So do you."

"I see now what a fool I was."

"You have said that before."

"Some people are born fools—I meant well."

"Why not start again?" Dare was as indifferent in making the suggestion as was Little Ladyfingers when one tried to attract her attention.

"You don't believe in me?"

"I am not sure," was her answer.

"Don't you think I've improved a little—I mean about temper and—the drink?"

Dare was certain now that Amos was a weak man with spurts of strength which deceived strangers. She became frankly contemptuous.

Amos met this with a patience which secretly astonished her; time was when he would have become enraged.

"We must plan for the little girl to have the quiet, well-bred background that you suggest to everyone was yours," he said. "I know you can give her a gentlewoman's training if I provide the setting. No more furnished rooms and patent-medicine or oil-camps! I worked with my brain in a cheap way, and here I work physically like a day laborer—neither way is right. I'm too fagged to study here—and you can't read. I bet you haven't tried, have you?"

"No," she replied. "One day I came across some songs—they said I used to sing them fairly well. Do you know what I did? I made a bonfire of them. Oh, don't shake your head; it was no worse than your drinking and gambling. Jimmie asked what I was doing, and I told her 'burning my bridges.' And as for books, I wouldn't unpack them and let them suffer by living next pans and washtubs. . . . Amos, why has it come to this? We must make it so the little girl never remembers any of it. Were you to strike the richest well in the world, it could not wipe out memories of what we've gone through. The price has been too dear."

"Yes," he said. "The little girl has made me realize it."

"She has meant so much to you!" Dare leaned toward him.

"Not that you love her less than I," he told her, "but differently. You have had the physical care and your own consequent depression. I think I'll accept the offer I've had, to go as foreman of a gang into Death Valley—the borax fields. There'd be a chance to save some money if I did."

"I don't like it—any more than I would like your going to Alaska or Mexico," Dare wanted to say, but she had not the heart to discourage him. So her answer was:

"Wouldn't that just be prospecting again?"

"No, I'd go on a salary; I can save my money, and then we can strike back into civilization. Eventually, I aim on semi-country living."

"How long must I stay here?" she asked. Her eyes were very tired.

"Not more than six months," he assured her.

"I'd rather go with you—or into town and work, than stay here!"

He shook his head. "I'll have a good salary and expenses," he mentioned. "This time I'll save every penny of it. Try to stay here, dear, because you have Jimmie, and everyone loves Little Ladyfingers and would be good to you—and to her."

Dare finally consented to stay on, and Amos went up into Death Valley, a sober, older-acting man. They came a little closer in understanding before he left camp; some of the romance and trust which had inspired their marriage shone faintly through the clouds of their life. Amos at last realized the true value of things, Dare comforted herself. His child had wakened his pride and ambition.

After he had gone, the magic that absence always exerts between lovers caused her somewhat to idealize him once more. He took on the aspect of a hero; he would surely succeed—now. Some day they would be able to visit Fanny and Martin without deception. Yes, Amos was a strong man with weak tendencies, she decided finally in those days, and these tendencies Little Ladyfingers and she could eradicate—somehow. She watched eagerly for his ardent letters, living in a dream world with Amos and Little Ladyfingers in a dream home. It had been worth all the effort and suffering, that this had come to pass now.

THE first of the year, Little Ladyfingers slipped back to heaven, and Dare wrote Amos, her dream-world in chaos. She dreaded the effect upon him. Despite her grief in the passing of her child, Dare realized dimly that the little girl's indifference toward all about her had been a significant symptom which would only have increased if she had lived. Dare packed away the keepsakes with a resigned pathos. She realized, also, that it was their child which had caused Amos to begin an upward climb—would he continue climbing upward now the child was gone? Confidence in her own powers was dead.

After she had written him, she sat down with folded hands to let morbidity claim her. But presently she realized that in so doing she was following Amos' own mistaken line of thought. She finally decided to find some work to do until Amos should return. She felt that regular duties would prove her salvation.

The Slack twins were married at this time, leaving their mother without waitresses, to say nothing of her "natural grief," as she confided to Dare over her fourth glass of spirits. So Dare took the only opening the camp afforded. She would rather "wait table" for Mrs. Slack, earning, besides a stipend and her meals, the

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By Nalbro Bartley

feeling that she was needed in even such a routine way, than simply to wait for Amos with morbid forebodings cluttering up her brain.

Jimmie approved of the plan. Had Jimmie not been burdened with such a mikado as Fate had given her, she would have long ago carved out some career for herself. But Jimmie's destiny was no longer in her own hands.

Amos' answer to Dare's letter telling him of Little Ladyfingers' death expressed concern for Dare but no mention of his own emotions. Nor did he seem eager to have details. Neither was there any rebelling at a God who gave and then took away. The letter puzzled Dare. She would have preferred a bitter denunciation of everyone in the world and in the heavens above—except his lost child. His message hinted only of an ennuï of soul—and a corresponding indifference of mind and body.

She did not tell Amos she was working. He could not have comprehended her viewpoint. Strange as it seemed, the work gave her a certain sort of uplift! These red-faced, coarse-mouthed, cruel-eyed men who gobbled food as she remembered Martin's hunting dogs had snapped at it, who swore and fought and lied—they preserved Dare's sanity during these days. Unconsciously she was learning a great deal, but to all intents she was simply a white-faced young woman always hurrying about with orders of food or laden with "dead dishes." "Ladyfingers' little ma," they called her—and let her go her way.

Six months were nearly ended, and Amos was returning. Dare was almost sorry he was coming back to interrupt her freedom and peace of mind. She dreaded reading his troubled eyes, lest she have to admit further defeat.

JIMMIE DIXON was found dead one morning—her head fractured by some blunt instrument. Her "mikado" had left camp during the night, taking with him the contents of the saloon cash-drawer.

Then Dare remembered how to cry. She learned many things between the time Jimmie was discovered, and the burial. When Jimmie was beside Ladyfingers' tiny mound, now faintly green by patient effort, the hurt of all of it seemed to lessen. Somehow the tiny mound was bereft of its former pathos now, for Jimmie's cheery soul not only was at rest but beside the baby she had so loved. It was good to see *something* definitely ended.

A posse was sent to bring Dixon back for a hemp picnic—but it proved of no avail. He had made sure his escape.

Life settled down as usual—with Dare at her post, wincing when she looked at Jimmie's deserted wickiup as she had once winced whenever she passed Ladyfingers' empty cradle. But



"I summon you," McNab said to Amos.

McNab believes in scrambling for God. I don't know how much there is in it, but I've made up my mind to sit back and let the other fellow make a fool of himself from now on."

He did not ask Dare her opinion or express interest over her welfare. He only shook his head when she told him about Jimmie. He took it for granted Dare would accompany him on this new adventure—which Dare was glad to do. It would afford a change, this colony in the sand-dune country. At least, it could be no worse.

A letter from Fanny came just before they broke camp, in which Fanny told of the prospect of another child, and her and Martin's joy—as well as their grief about Ladyfingers. "You must come home, dear," the letter ended. "No matter what success Amos is having, come home and let us comfort you."

Dare did not show Amos the letter. The invitation seemed a merciful alternative should things prove too terrible.

used to sing to the baby and push her

CHAPTER IX

DARE'S first impression of Duncan McNab, high priest of the occult colony, was that of a dynamic trumpeter with a continual frenzy to be known and to dominate. He had shifting faun's eyes, a spiritual forehead, black, tangled hair, and

another baby was born in camp and Ladyfingers' possessions went to welcome the newcomer. Jimmie's house was rented by a Portuguese family whose members quarreled good-naturedly and ate hot-tasting messes which they insisted Dare should share; and tried to tame their vicious horse, Juanita, by whispering the creed in her right ear on Friday and her left ear on Wednesday—which was certain to cure unless Juanita had been born at Whitsuntide, in which event the case was hopeless!

Then Amos came back to camp. He had lost his money, gambling. He said he did not give a continental so there was no use upbraiding him or crying—particularly crying! He was through making plans or loving anyone else except Dare—Little Ladyfingers had taught him the futility of anything else. He did not want to talk about her—nor hear her spoken of as dead. Oddly enough, this interested Dare.

When she asked what they were to do, he told her aimlessly that he had traveled part of the way down from the Valley with a man who claimed to be a seer—Duncan McNab, high priest of an occult colony located in the California sand dunes. He had invited Amos to bring his wife and come and live with them—had promised them work.

"I'm going to keep sane," Amos told her. "I can't keep steady here or any other place where men scramble for gold.



* "And Bly Scottswood . . . your old beau? He has never married and has gone in for motoring."

an animal mouth—a strangely nervous face with its emotional depths and numberless fine lines. His greatest and most glorious moments were when confessing his basest deeds. Life for him was in terms of drama. He believed that every reform movement required to be dramatized by pioneers, in order to awaken the sluggish, sheep-souls who plodded along in beaten pathways.

"He seems as if a merciless Destiny held him in its grip," Dare said to Amos after listening to McNab's exaggerated, egotistical expoundings of his hybrid creed.

McNab liked Amos because he saw in him a tangled soul with unlimited possibilities. It is easier to influence a tangled soul than one with a direct though narrow purpose, since a real purpose is fearless and not to be confused. McNab surmised, also, the sordid soil from which Amos sprang, and that he existed without

spiritual sustenance except as it was indirectly supplied by his wife. Therefore it was right and meet that he follow McNab and rejoice in a lack of limitations. McNab read the marks of temper and discontent in Amos' face and the corresponding marks it had left in Dare's. He knew these young people were at a crossroads—yet they loved each other.

McNab was of the same aristocratic, "repressed" stock as Dare. Jokingly he said his family came to England with one robber, William the Conqueror, and to Ireland with another—Cromwell. He claimed there was a family legend that the sons of his race cried aloud before birth, significant of mystical powers and in protest against the sorrows of mankind before them. These powers had been stifled by family pride and too much money.

Through a series of misfortunes—or good fortunes, as McNab

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called them—his startling soul became an outcast, the family black sheep, penniless and free to pursue his own course. Love of the dramatic and a shrewd business instinct added to self-pity and excessive pride combined to make him a self-appointed high-priest of a cult which borrowed some of the Druidic doctrines, took a generous slice from the reincarnation theory as well as other Oriental philosophies and which believed in a definite, material organization seeking for spiritual links.

He told Dare he believed faith was a principle and not a divine emotion. Spiritual organization demanded individual interpretation. There was as great a need to play God's fool as His hero. McNab had the cultural background of Anglican orthodoxy and a corresponding family circle. Therefore he employed high-flown phrases and smart-sounding nothings to advantage.

He met Dare and Amos at the town nearest the settlement. They had dinner at a Chinese inn—raw fish sliced to tissue-paper thinness and covered with sauce, and some light wine—while McNab outlined their future work.

He did not like Dare, because she was too sane. Her steady eyes indicated the poise of a woman who has endured. This was not the set of working qualities McNab desired. In the vernacular of guttersnipes, he "was out to snare freaks"—freaks who would abet him in outraging orthodoxy and commonly accepted standards of living. There were many who responded to his invitation. In Amos, admittedly a material failure, he believed he had found one of these.

As McNab talked, his long fingers rolling bread-crumbs into pellets for the gulls on the balcony, Dare realized that what he was saying was wrong. In time Amos would see its error.

At the same time she also experienced a certain enjoyment; she was facing a new problem far removed from the oil-fields. It offered a mental tonic, no matter what antidote might later be required. It offered a chance to use her mind—and let her back rest! So she did not experience the dismay common sense normally would have incited.

"No movement endures founded solely on negations," McNab drawled in his purring voice with an occasional shrill inflection that was a sort of vocal punctuation.

Transfixed, Amos responded to the man's magnetism.

MCNAB talked on and on, averring that beauty belonged to the senses, truth to the reasoning faculties and goodness to the moral will. Then, without coherence, he declared the Occident needed the Orient to be complete; he welcomed Buddhism Shintoism, so on—there was room for all. True, some might be wrong—but was not error kept alive by the germ of truth it contained? What his colony was striving for was intellectual honesty and not sectarian exclusiveness, to teach men that it was because they saw only their bodies that they feared death. Life was progress, whether or no, he swept on; progress meant change; singing birds and winds were changing the shape of the universe even as human beings with directed plans. As one became more in tune with the colony's ideals, they learned more of its mysteries. No novice could conceive its glory.

As for practical details: Many relatives of the forty-odd followers sent their monthly stipends—embarrassing to accept, but necessary. The land yielded crops; a few luxuries were permitted. A small paper was circulated when printing and postage could be met. McNab offered himself on lecture tours, occasionally landing amid the unwitting, golden-oak natives of the Middle West, among whom he threw mental bombs broadcast. The "inmates" wore a gray toga-like uniform. The men let their beards grow; the women cut their hair short. These conditions, however, were not imposed upon novices; indeed, they were not permitted until one was admitted to the inner circle.

Final vows never could be canceled; a curse attended any who denied them. The final vows taken, any money or property belonging to the individual was turned in to the temple fund. This was always in accordance with the initiated one's wish.

Amos was to work on the farm, and Dare could help with the paper, McNab decided. He perceived Dare's physical fatigue. He had a certain consideration for women; he believed flattery was the best way to win them—remnant of his drawing-room etiquette. This appealed to any woman like Dare who was tired and bewildered, as well as to plain "freaks," also wearied of being criticized and pitied by bromidic, honest-to-goodness relatives.

As they left the table, McNab was seized with a spasm of asthma, a trying thing to witness. It seemed as if a fiend clung to his throat and would not let go. He tried to pray, but a hateful snarl was the only sound he made; his hands knotted and stiffened. The Chinaman hovered anxiously by; Amos tried to

help him to a chair. He seemed a very demon caught in his own bad deeds by some reprimanding power.

Presently the spasm passed, and he sank wearily into a chair, smiling at them. "I'm so loosely constructed that the psychic comes in between the chinks. That was an attempt at medium control by elemental powers," he said quietly. "I have to fight them off all the time. . . . Well, shall we go?"

AS he rose, the demon part of him vanished; he suggested a cavalier offering Dare his arm for the next waltz. But intuition told her this was no time to express discord. No matter how abhorrent to herself, anything lifting Amos from the material bog in which he wallowed must be endured.

In an old buggy, drawn by a horse and driven by a local character, they were jolted for miles over sandy, twisting roads, the golden-green sea splashing on one side and the purple line of mountains standing guard on the other.

The local character knew and respected McNab. There were times when the priest mounted a gaunt white horse and rode into towns to heal by prayer, accepting no alms, by which means he created a reputation for divinity, and often brought a convert to his fold. By patching his shreds of character with pseudo-holiness, he achieved an ability to withstand criticism or attempts at wrecking his platform. He was so well read that even his enemies could not but admire. The Rig-Veda, the Quran, the Ariesta and the Upanishads were all familiar to him. At the moment, he was reading the new testament in Greek, he told Dare, producing a copy from the folds of his gray toga. He would teach Amos many such things, he promised. Amos needed mental training to achieve spiritual growth.

Yet Dare knew it all to be false—and futile.

The colony consisted of wretched frame and stucco buildings, a central hall, a temple, attempts at a garden, the farm, the small post office and general store conducted by the cult—and the sand dunes, cold, shining and unstable, now veiled by silvery fog, now burning with desertlike heat. It seemed a bit of society so shut out of the world that it might have slipped off some planet to lodge behind the great sand-banks while the sea swirled about as a prison guard.

While Dare was meeting the members and being shown their bungalow, and following Amos' delight in the novelty of the thing, she was dreary at heart and bitter in her unspoken opposition. Amos accepted all this as a sick child grasps for a toy to offset the pain. It was what he needed at this time; so she must stay with him, waiting to help him run away from this unpleasant rag-out of beliefs when the proper time arrived. It was only another lesson in selflessness. Her duty was to watch Amos learn the unreality of what he was now believing might be real.

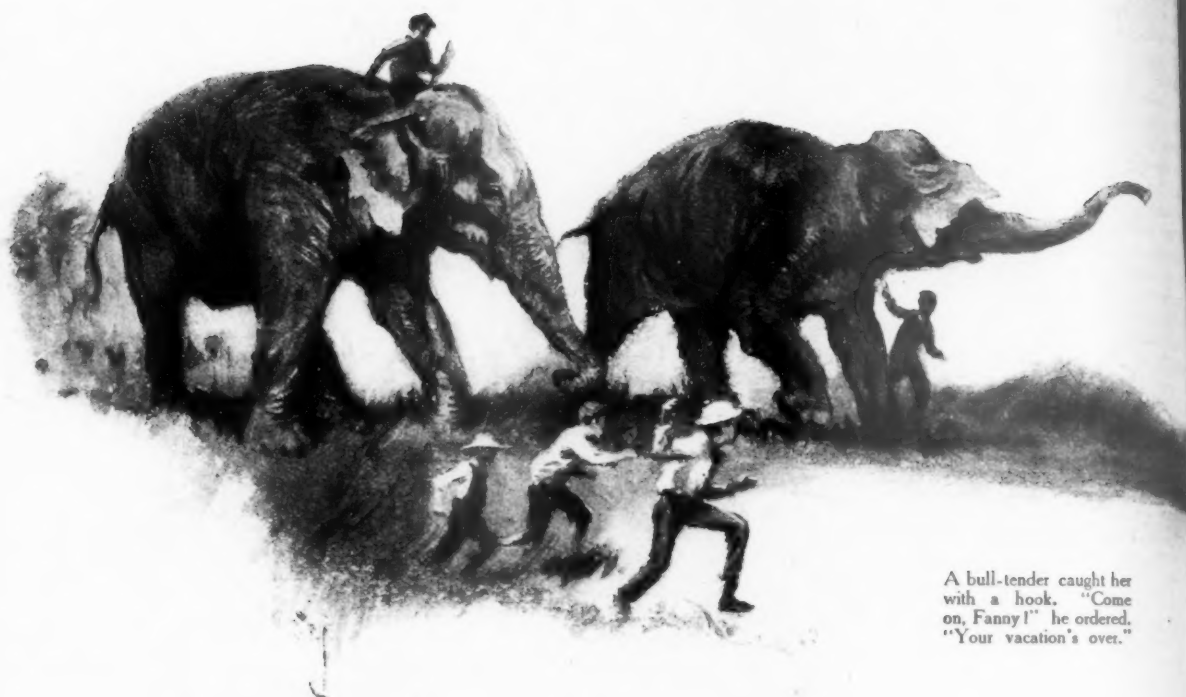
The members of the colony were somewhat like Amos—with a knave or so sprinkled in to keep the thing afloat. The members welcomed Amos but shrank from Dare. It was Amos who had the "makings," as it were. These queer-faced women and emaciated men so bent on redeeming their own souls that they were content to let the rest of mankind go to the devil—all depressed Dare.

She was given a slight part in community housework. The colony ate in the open unless rains interfered, at tables set with the plainest and scantiest of food. McNab usually read aloud from his own writings while the meal was in progress. They had fasting periods and elaborate temple-rites to which Dare was not admitted.

AFTER a few days they were told there had been a civilization so perfect in its ordering that it was unbelievable in these troubled ages—and that this civilization had been located upon this very spot. Through sin, the civilization was physically demolished, but its astral form remained above the erstwhile physical base. The present members of the cult had, in former lifetimes, been part and parcel of this earthly paradise. Therefore they had been reassembled by McNab, once leader of the earlier civilization, and also then a sinner and the cause of its downfall, to reorganize upon the now desolate sand dunes, recreate the civilization as an example to the world, meantime repenting of their own folly. In time this miraculous civilization would prove a mecca for the sin-stained world who would seek redemption at its fount.

"I feel this is the truth," Amos told Dare as they stood alone on the shore. Amos had been told this mystery by McNab, Dare being excluded from the confidence.

"Do you, dear?" she said, stroking his hand. He was such a child! He had lost his assertiveness (Continued on page 148)



A bull-tender caught her with a hook. "Come on, Fanny!" he ordered. "Your vacation's over."

ENVY

By COURTNEY RYLEY COOPER

Illustrated by
J. ALLEN ST. JOHN

THROUGHOUT the whole animal kingdom "the feminine instinct" runs true to form. Fanny was no exception.

Fanny stood third in the picket line of the Great Consolidated's menagerie, three solid yet sensitive tons of the eternal feminine. Time was when she had swayed second in that line, and old Mamma, the head of the elephant herd, of which Fanny was a part, at times was wont to show her a few meager trifles of favoritism, such as permitting her to munch at the sugarcane which was rightfully Mamma's, or to allow her, without rebuke, now and then to stretch forth a pleading trunk when some small boy selected Mamma as the beneficiary of his peanut philanthropy. Once or twice Fanny had even exerted a small amount of subordinate authority over the rest of the herd, acting as a sort of straw boss under the inexorable rule of the aged, tyrannous Mamma—and Mamma had made no objection. But that was before "Billy Sunday" arrived, and now all was changed. Fanny was the favorite no longer, and the roseate hue of her world had accordingly become a lugubrious blue.

Billy Sunday was a runt. True, as yet he had not passed his twentieth year, and elephants continue to grow, even after fifty; but for all that, his size hardly approached that of a "punk" of ten, with the consequent billing by the circus of the "most marvelous infant pachyderm ever exhibited under canvas," and an infatuation on the part of old Mamma that approached the senile adoration of a toothless grandmother. Billy could do no wrong; the peanuts, the pieces of sugarcane, the slices of watermelon and gobs of sticky circus popcorn which once had gone to Mamma through the seniority of her estimated hundred and a quarter

years of life, now vanished into the pink maw of Billy, while wrinkled Mamma looked on in fatuous appreciation, and trumpeted for the "bull men" and their accompanying paregoric when Billy, true to pachydermic adolescence, developed colic.

To Frieda, to Snyder and Flo and the rest of the herd, it all made little difference. They never had known power nor position nor the supreme joy of being a favorite in the eyes of their ruler; for their sole interest in her was limited to waiting while she tested a bridge on the way from the huge elephant-cars to the circus lot, or following meekly in her wake along the route of the parade. Merely subjects were they; theirs to obey implicitly, for the simple reason that they never had known anything but obedience. But to the more youthful feminine soul of Fanny, the new order of things was gall and wormwood. Her sun had been eclipsed by an impudent, precocious runt, who had intruded upon her happiness without excuse or apology—and what woman can sense such a displacement without locking arms with the green-eyed imp of envy? To make matters worse, Fanny, at the moment, was undergoing the anguish of a first "Sunday on the lot" under the new régime.

To a circus and all it contains, a "Sunday on the lot" means rest, peace and enjoyment. The bands do not blare on Sunday; the tents, with the exception of that sheltering the menagerie, are only half raised, and the workmen and performers say good-by to the white tops, to explore the town, its parks and places of amusement, leaving only a few unfortunates behind to guard the circus property and to direct the crowds who stream forth to gain a first-hand view of the show free before its regular performances of Monday.

Envy

A golden day is it for the elephants, for they are then often placed outside the menagerie tent proper, in pleasant proximity to a confectionery stand, where may be purchased not only the inevitable lemonade for humans, but the popcorn and peanuts that go to make up the "free-will offerings" of the crowd to the waiting beasts. And golden this day had been—to all but Fanny.

Green-eyed she had watched her new rival all that morning, grunting and swaying at his picket pin. Had Fanny thus fretted, even in the old days, it would have called for a trumpeting blast of disapproval from old Mamma, to say nothing of a slap from her long, heavy trunk that would have sent the offending recipient squealing to her haunches. But Billy could do it; Billy could grunt and strain at his chain; Billy could even squeeze old Mamma out of the soft spot of sand she occupied, that he might rest his feet, weary from the weight of his fat round body, and Mamma made not the slightest objection. In fact, when Billy became suddenly panicky from the onslaught of a new set of fleas which had taken up a homestead in the soft flesh behind one of his ears, old Mamma, instead of disciplining him for disturbing the serenity

the picket pin. Slow, careful effort; then her chain also fell free. A moment she hesitated. Then, like some stout, determined delegate demanding her seat at a convention, Fanny strode grimly forward and took her place beside the two other elephants at the hay-wagon.

For one, long glorious moment, old Mamma did not notice. Then she wheeled and with a sweep of her trunk shunted Billy out of the way. Before Fanny could turn, the tyrant of the herd had lowered her head, hunched her muscles, and lunged bellowing forward, like an overgrown goat, to butt the squealing Fanny halfway back to the picket-line, then to whang her across the snout with her trunk for good measure. Fanny took the hint. She wheeled into place and stood there, yet recalcitrant and defiant.

Mamma turned back to the hay. All that could be seen of Billy was the breadth of his back as his championess dragged forth a great trunkful of food and showered it upon him. Not an animal keeper was in sight; the rest of the line was dozing at its pins. The road was clear—to freedom!

Slowly, carefully, her small eyes seeking to sweep in every direction at once, Fanny backed away from the line, sneaked behind the bulky form of Snyder, and waited. There came no



of her Sunday morning, had curled her trunk in the sand, then blown the gritty mass with all the strength of her great lungs upon the flea-patch. Billy squealed his joy in the parasites' departure. Fanny looked on in pig-eyed disgust, then pulling hard against her chain, she reached forward for a wayward peanut just in front of the interloper. The result was a bellow from old Mamma, a quick blow with her trunk; and Fanny, blinking groggily, slipped back to her place in line. But rebellion was born in her heart.

The bull-tenders hurried from the menagerie tent at last with the daily rations of hay. Billy Sunday squealed once more, dived into his meal, ate it all, took part of Mamma's while she watched him with complacent pride, then went for Fanny's. It was too much. The dethroned elephant trumpeted wildly, then subsided, for Mamma was watching her; Billy gobbled happily on.

The afternoon came, and with it the hundreds of visitors, to crowd in front of the elephants and to cram them with the dainties they loved. Far down the line, Frieda, Snyder, Alice and the rest got their share. Fanny, once the best fed of all, saw peanut after peanut held forth before her, only to disappear into the grasping trunk of the new favorite. Once Fanny grasped a goober before the glutton could reach it. Again Mamma trumpeted in high, threatening tones, and Fanny's eyes took on a far-away look. Reproofs were coming a bit too frequently, even for an elephant. Hours of disappointment followed before the crowd faded, and the few animal men crawled into the shade of the menagerie tent to an hour of sleep. The circus drowsed.

Fanny, weaving at her picket-pin, had almost followed the lead of Frieda and Alice, who had doubled down in the soft sand to sleep, when she became suddenly awake with envious curiosity. Mamma was teaching Billy Sunday a trick that once she had taught Fanny, while only fifty feet away lay the reward, a farmer's load of fresh, clean hay, "spotted" for the night just outside the menagerie tent!

Carefully the long trunk of Mamma worked at the chain which fastened Billy Sunday to his picket-stake, while the beady eyes of the runt elephant followed every motion. Slowly the proboscis of the older pachyderm loosened the half-hitch which had been thrown about the stake—then she turned to her own bonds, to work with them a moment, then to step forward, a free elephant. Billy followed her slow, sneaking progress, and they were back at the hay-wagon, munching greedily. It was the final blow.

Fanny knew that trick. And Fanny was hungry. Few the peanuts that had fallen to her lot; smaller than usual the ration of hay, because of the onslaught of her chubby, greedy little rival. Not only was Fanny hungry, but Fanny was envious, and in her heart the fires of rebellion burned briskly. Her trunk writhed to

squeal of warning from Billy Sunday, no bellow of command from old Mamma, no shout from an animal man. Fanny moved on.

Half across the lot she stopped, and setting her forehead against the end of a wagon, pretended to push it as a few circus performers passed—the routine work of an elephant on the lot, especially on Sunday afternoons. The performers barely noticed her, and Fanny, ambling a bit faster now, turned toward the fringe of woods, only a few rods away—her new world, her freedom.

IN her mind was but one thought—to get away. She was tired of Mamma, of Billy Sunday and grieved by the fickle manner in which the leader of the herd had transferred her attentions to another. She was envious of a fat little butterball, a greedy, squealing, diminutive hunk of elephant flesh; and now she was going where there were no Billy Sundays and where she might create a universe of her own, to be ruled by but a single mind, and that mind hers.

In a word Fanny sought relief, and she found it by gently pushing down an old rail fence and with a slight increase in speed, rolled on to the deeper recesses of the woods, which meant to her surcease from the rule of a tyrant and the squeals of an interloper.

It was cool in the woods, and Fanny liked it, wandering about at will, sniffing at the ground, searching without knowing it, for peanuts. But there were none. On she ambled, taking no note of direction, and not caring, stopping for a moment to investigate the nut-covered ground beneath a hickory tree, trying out a few of the hard-shelled things scattered about her, giving them up as a bad job, then trundling on again. Once she tried eating the dead leaves which covered the ground, but they had an acrid taste, and she spat them out. Then—glory of glories! Just before her, tossing in a patch of fading sunlight, showed the fronds of green vegetation, succulent-appearing and inviting. Fanny swooped forward, grasped a large trunkful of the alluring plant, waved it in the air, then jammed it into her mouth.

Her beady eyes rolled; she gulped in a disappointed, surprised manner and spat with all her strength. Her tongue suddenly seem to have touched a red-hot stove, and the roof of her mouth assumed the blazed sensation induced by an overstrong mustard plaster. Stinging nettle!

After that, Fannie looked with suspicious eye upon the luscious patches of blue grass in the clearings and passed coldly by a red

haw-tree with its dainty but uninvestigated fruit. Fanny vaguely, elephant-like, was beginning to wonder about a number of things, principally where she could find something to eat, something she could recognize, something that smelled or looked like a circus. But Fanny searched in vain.

ON Fanny wandered while the shadows gathered and the sun dipped. At last darkness came, deep darkness, a condition unknown to Fanny, except in the huge elephant-cars aboard the circus train, with the other members of the herd. Not in all her recollection had there ever been a time when Fanny had been in darkness alone. Even on the way to the cars at night torches lighted the way. Old Mamma was always in the lead to give warning of the slightest danger, and bull tenders—elephant men—were ever close to their charges, to guide their silent feet along the proper course. But now there was no Mamma, no elephant man, nothing but tree trunks which rose up to butt Fanny in the forehead when she made to move about. And worst of all, there was no night apportionment of hay, to be munched at through the long hours until morning. Fanny stood still and trumpeted. There was no answer. It was all discomforting and lonely and fearsome. Then heaven opened.

It was after the moon had risen and Fanny could find her way out of the close-grown woods, knocking down a fence or two in her ambling, aimless progress, suddenly then, she stopped short as one great foot descending upon a round object crushed it. A sudden bulge came into Fanny's eyes. She sniffed, her trunk curling before her. Her mouth opened with anticipation. It smelled like watermelon. Watermelon—but in this strange, unkind world into which she had come, there had been too many surprises for Fanny to rush into anything now without reconnoitering. So, very slowly, she lowered her trunk and sniffed again at the crushed object. It still smelled like watermelon. Warily she caught up one small bit of the crushed thing and touched it to her tongue. It was watermelon; and Fanny shivered her joy as her trunk swooped downward to her first real feed of the day.

The watermelon vanished, and Fanny swayed forward, investigating with her trunk. Here was another, and another; watermelons were all about her, hundreds of watermelons, just waiting for the descent of an elephantine foot and the curling caress of a leathery trunk. Fanny smashed a second melon and devoured it. Followed a third, a fourth, a fifth. Her stomach began to trouble her slightly, but Fanny disregarded the warning. A sixth, a seventh and an eighth. The ache assumed greater proportions. A ninth, a tenth—Fanny was not stopping to differentiate between the green and the ripe; an eleventh, a twelfth, and the unlucky thirteenth. Then, bulging and bulbous, Fanny stopped short, face to face with an awful realization. True to her elephant make-up—and let it be known that elephants and human children are one as concerns the indulgence of their appetites and the reactions of their stomachs—Fanny was in the throes of the worst attack of colic she had ever experienced in her life, and there was no menagerie man nearby with paregoric.

A child with colic is a distressful object. Magnify that a thousand times without aid and without comfort, and you have Fanny in the midst of that watermelon patch with thirteen green and ripe watermelons inside her and her stomach bulging like a freight-car. She squealed, she trumpeted, she lay down and rolled. To no avail.

The pain grew more intense, and Fanny became more energetic in her distress. At last she tottered to her feet, and for want of anything else to do, leaped into a rambling, slanting lope which carried her squealing, through the fence again, once more into the woods, out, back, out for the second time and finally into an open road. Finally, tired and panting, she wallowed in a great pocket of dust, snorted twice, then settled down. . . . Sleep conquered her distress; and Fanny, for a time, was at rest.

WHEN Fanny awoke, the colic was gone, but another discomfort had taken its place. Fanny was cold, very cold; the mists of dawn hung about her like a wet blanket. Shivering, she rose and began to trot forward again, only to stop at the sight of something that looked, in the darkness, like a tent. She signaled. No answer came from an elephant herd, no gruff command from Mamma. Fanny went forward, safe and happy. A tent meant many things.

A fence or two intervened, but that means little to an elephant. The haven she sought proved to be a barn in reality, but a tent to Fanny, and she searched for an opening. Quite homelike it was, with the smell of horses and dogs. Gruntling softly, she skirted the structure, then ambled through a double door.

Warmth at last and shelter from the mist and dew, and the redolent odor of hay! What more could any elephant desire? Fanny stumbled forward in the dim interior to rub at last against something soft and warm and to stand there gurgling with happiness. Then—

Whang!

Something like a double pile-driver struck her in the ribs. She gasped with the impact, sought to circle—and gasped again. Once more had the double blow struck her, this time full in the wind to be repeated and repeated, before the surprised elephant could even get her trunk into action. Dogs barked. For the fourth time the blows came, harder than before, and Fanny, coughing for air, decided to move.

Before her was a faint glint of light, and she made for it. A ripping, rending crash, and she was in the open, running at top speed through fences and pigsties, and carrying, gracefully draped over her neck, the remains of a barn-door frame. Behind her lanterns gleamed, shouts sounded, and the victorious hee-haw of a Missouri mule rose high upon the morning air. Fanny went through another fence, lost her footing, scrambled wildly, and came to herself, panic-stricken, in the middle of a duck-pond.

AFTER that things were hazy as Fanny loped from one field to another in the early daylight hours, tried in vain to shake herself free from the barn-door necklace which knocked and banged around her shoulders, trumpeted, grunted and squealed. The sun discovered her in the midst of a clover-field, battle-scarred, mud-caked, hungrier, and lonelier even than she had been in the darkness of the night.

Away off somewhere a dog barked, and instinctively Fanny moved toward the sound, mowing a path in the waving clover as she did so, stopping now and then to sniff at the food all about her, then, with the memories of stinging nettle and colic still strong upon her, refraining bravely from touching it. What Fanny wanted most of all right now was peanuts, upheld in the hands of small boys—and company, even the glaring eye and wallowing trunk of Mamma. When an elephant will follow a dog's bark, that elephant is lonely. It cares nothing for dogs in the menagerie; the inquisitive canine which sniffs about an elephant's feet all too often gets a blow from a swinging trunk which lifts him, yelping, halfway across the menagerie. But right now Fanny would have made friends with a—

She stopped, sat down on her haunches, then lunged forward again. One living thing there was with which she could never make peace, lonely or not, and it had jumped out before her in the only bare spot of the field—a mouse! A field-mouse, it is true, but a mouse just the same! Fanny, in addition to being feminine, was an elephant, and she ran with the greatest speed she had developed since the colic struck her.

On and on; then a crash, and she halted limply, to find herself in a serrated place where grew things with delicious odors, cabbages and lettuce and turnips, their tops waving temptingly. Here were aromas which Fanny recognized, and her trunk went out on a tour of investigation. Again and again she sniffed at a bulbous cabbage, retreating, then allowing her appetite to draw her forward once more. At last the trunk clutched the vegetable, lifting it, roots and all toward the waiting, opened mouth—

Wham!

A shotgun—in action. The cabbage dropped. One hind foot waved uncertainly, to be followed by the other as Fanny, stung beyond all previous experience, did a reproduction of her dancing act in the circus. A masculine voice, high, frightened, sounded behind her:

"Gosh dern ye! Get out of there!"

But Fanny still shivered and shook with that awful stinging, as though a million gigantic bees were attacking her at once. Again came the booming report of the shotgun, and a new flock of bees engaged her. Fanny did not hesitate longer. Leaving a part of her wooden necklace on the fence, she burst out of the garden, trumpeting distressfully, knocked over a smokehouse, and ran on as hard as she could.

A mile—two. Houses appeared in the distance. Out on the open road ran Fanny, losing the rest of her necklace as she scampered out of the way of a runaway horse and a squawking driver, two much-frightened creatures who had no idea that the cause of their trouble was far more frightened than they. Into a clean, well-spaced grove she dived—happily!

Ahead of her were many people, shouting and laughing as they trooped along, lugging baskets, running about and evidently making ready for a day of play. To Fanny, a crowd was a crowd. There were boys there, and girls and women, with a few men sprinkled

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Before Fanny could turn, the tyrant of the herd had lowered her head and lunged bellowing forward.

about—just the sort of crowd that floods into a circus menagerie and feeds peanuts to the elephants. The trunk of Fanny the envious went high in the air. Trumpeting gladly, she loped forward, happy at last in her contemplation of companionship.

A screech! Then screams, and running, yelling forms. The Sunday-school picnic that was—wasn't. Hurrying mothers grasped shrieking children and yanked them out of the way. A basket containing one pie, two chickens and a container of peanut butter flew through the air, struck Fannie square between the eyes—and splattered. The few men shouted compelling orders—and also ran. Fanny, her eyes full of pie, wandered about in circles, looking for some one who would hand her a peanut. Instead, one of the last of the retreating forms spasmodically raised an umbrella, banged her across the snout and disappeared before Fanny could collect enough her senses to get mad about it. Then she was all alone again.

For a moment Fanny trotted about, seeking to find some reason for it all. A crowd never had acted like that before. No little boy ever had scampered away from her; no circus-going gentleman ever had whanged her in the eye with a soft pie; and no lady had ever walloped her with an umbrella. It was all new and distasteful and destructive of peacefulness of mind. And out of it all only one thing was certain—that this was a new world where everything was topsy-turvy, and where nothing ran according to schedule. Fanny trumpeted in a way which explained thoroughly that she didn't like it, and moved on.

Out she went, only to see before her collecting crowds, people who ran at her approach, others who leaped excitedly forward and threw things at her, ranging from bricks to old shoes. There was no comfort there; Fanny turned back, started out the other end of the park, only to find a gleaming piece of machinery, clanging wagons, scampering men in blue uniforms and then, as she ambled closer, a spurting stream of water which caught her full in the face, whirled her about and sent her off in another direction. The world had surely gone to pot.

Still another direction she tried, only to find another fire-engine, policemen, firemen, camp-followers and excited townspeople, to say nothing of that stream of water which sent her squealing to her haunches. Heavy was the heart of Fanny the recalcitrant as she turned back into the woods again. Nobody loved her; nobody wanted her; life had become only one long, continuous wallop.

Back on the picnic-grounds, where the baskets were scattered about and food everywhere, she sought to forget her troubles for a space in a gratification of her hunger. Wildly she reached for the nearest available bit of food and jammed it into her mouth, only to drop it in disgust. No elephant likes a pickle, much less an elephant in distress. For the twentieth time that morning she raised her trunk and trumpeted. Then suddenly she cocked her head, rolled her eyes and humped herself forward.

In her eagerness Fanny shied against a small tree and sent it crashing downward, while she tangled dizzily in its branches. Then as the trumpeting sound came again from the distance, she ambled through the bandstand, came forth with half the cupola on her

back, and almost dancing in her delight, hoisted herself forward toward the approaching pachyderm.

As she came into the open with its scattering crowd, and with its firemen ready once more to slam against her the force of the water-mains, she hesitated as she gazed at the approaching beast, then with a whimpering squeal, pulled her head in between her shoulders, turtlelike, and awaited the inevitable. For half a block away, trotting beside the bull tender came old Mamma!

WILDLY Fanny looked. But there were the panicky crowds, the firemen—and what was worse, more than a score of hurrying circus men, armed with hooks, and longing to sink them in the soft flesh behind Fanny's ears. Piteously she trumpeted once more. The answer was a blast of reproach as old Mamma cleared the last twenty feet and Fanny sought to telescope herself in a vain attempt to escape the punishment she knew was sure to come. The animal men intervened. Slowly Fanny shook herself and shimmied from her bulky head to her tiny, swishing tail, in assurance that all of her unfortunate self was together. She tried a step forward cautiously, while old Mamma, grunting near by and swinging that vicious trunk in readiness for further action, watched her with beady, angry eyes.

A bull-tender caught her just beneath the trunk, with a hook. "Come on, Fanny!" he ordered. "Come on home. Your vacation's over."

The menagerie tent at last! The smell of the hay and of the animals, the sight of the long lines of cages. A clanking chain—Fanny was back in the picket-line, back in her old place, beside the fat butterball who had stolen her position in life and sent her forth into the world to a night and day of disaster. But for some reason—and even Fanny could not have told why—he did not seem so arrogant as he once had. In fact, there appeared to be good points about him that Fanny never previously had noticed, a friendliness and a babyish appeal that had never struck her before. Slowly Fanny eyed him; slowly Fanny sized him up, a round little runt who squealed and grunted and ate, and who seemed helpless and in need of friendship. Fanny allowed her trunk to go investigatively forward, waving in the air before Billy, while from her place in the picket line old Mamma watched with vigilant eyes. Then the trunk of Billy rose and touched that of the older elephant—the greeting of friendliness; and Fanny blinked with the surprise of it.

A small boy passed, walking down the line, eating peanuts as he went.

Fanny's eyes searched the ground. Out there was one peanut, one big, double-jointed, hump-backed jumbo peanut which had escaped the gaze of the greedy Billy.

Slowly the long trunk writhed forward, hesitated, picked up the peanut, started to bring it to the waiting, anxious home base—then stopped.

Then out it wavered again, toward the swinging trunk of Billy Sunday, there to hold it before him.

A little squeal. A quick thrust, and the peanut was gone down the throat of the runt; and Fanny had slumped back to her place in the picket-line. But from the other side, where old Mamma had watched every move, had come a low-voiced, throaty grunt which meant much—even to Fanny. The spell was broken. Old Mamma had voiced her pleasure; the world was a world again.



On Fanny wandered,
while the shadows
gathered.

THE CLAWS OF THE TONG

By
JACK
BOYLE

Illustrated by
W. H. D. KOERNER

LEE SAT KAN, chief of the Four Brother *tong*, slowly turned the pages of a parchment-bound book on the fine tissue leaves of which were written many perpendicular entries in Chinese characters. It seemed, and was, an account-book—the ledger of the *tong* whose charges were reckoned in the currency of life and death.

Over one page he paused. Across the top in crimson ink were eight characters, all alike and each representing an unsheathed dragon's claw the symbol of murder unavenged. Below, written vertically in black, was a column that reached to the bottom of the page. Lee Sat Kan scanned it gravely.

"Twelve full moons since the evil deed was done, and the debt remains unpaid," he mused. "The spirits of my brethren who lie beneath the Great Waters cry out that the appointed hour of *tong* justice is here. So shall it be."

He closed the book and sat in silence for many minutes while his eyes grew judicially somber as he visualized, detail by detail, the purpose that shaped itself in his mind.

"So shall it be done—even as it was done in the ancient reign of the Fourth Manchu," he murmured softly, and tapped with a fingernail upon the table-top. Instantly a servant appeared from somewhere beyond the priceless tapestries that draped the walls of the *tong* sanctum.

"Command Wong Fuen to my presence," directed the *tong* chief, in tones demanding obedience.

The man backed out, salaaming as he departed until his forehead touched the floor. Within a moment the draperies parted, and a young Chinese bowed before his chief.

"Where may be found the foreign captain whose evil hand rules the boat *Vasa* which brings our countrymen from the land of the Mexicans?" inquired Lee Sat Kan.

"Even now the boat of that thrice-cursed one rides at ease upon the waters of the bay."

"Then indeed the rich blessing of the gods is ours. Listen well, Wong Fuen, that thou mayest perform my command with much wisdom. In the third hour of the sun's sleep, seek this servant of all devils. Greet him with much homage and many soft words of deceit, saying thy master would have speech with him upon a matter whose rich reward shall be a thousand coins of gold. And so, when avarice has blinded his little wisdom, guide him hither, alone, passing through many doors and making many turnings."

The *tong* chief's slender fingers clenched until their long nails bit into the flesh of his palm.

"Err not in this, Wong Fuen," he added, "for tonight when thou comest with this guest of the Four Brothers, all shall be prepared to welcome him as is his just due."

"O illustrious Master, thy command is obeyed! Living, I shall fail not."

"Go, then, and may the wisdom of Confucius abide with thee."

As Wong Fuen bowed himself from the room, Lee Sat Kan drew his silken sleeve across his eyes as though to clear them of the gossamer of mystery and intrigue that hung in the air of the room. He glanced at a watch that might have been the time-piece of any American of rather esthetic taste.

"By Jove, I really must hurry a bit!" he exclaimed in perfect English. "It's a half after two, and I'm due at that confounded woman's club at three. Frightful bore! But it must be done."

At the Parthenon Club that afternoon Lee Sat Kan, raconteur, graduate of Columbia and distinguished savant in the realm of Oriental literature, spoke upon "The Progress of Christianity in China," in an overcrowded auditorium. His address was a skilled and tactful effort, with well-phrased periods that approached eloquence. If, now and then, a bit of sly sarcasm seemed to lurk behind his words, this was too deftly masked to impinge upon the literal minds of his audience. The delighted ladies of the club flocked about him, showering their congratulations, when he had finished.

"Oh, Mr. Kan,—or should I say Mr. Lee? I never can remember about Chinese names,—I enjoyed your lecture so much," chortled Mrs. Raycroft-Smith, forcing her way to the side of the club guest. "It is so encouraging to think of the wonderful work in China being done by civilization. And that reminds me—I just must ask you about those perfectly terrible Chinese *tongs* we read about. Do they really exist? And are they as awful as our writers say? Do tell me about them. I'm dying with curiosity."

"The *tongs* of my race are organizations for mutual benefit, largely of social activity, and may be compared to the secret lodges and orders of American men," was the answer, given with a bow and smile that were the quintessence of deferential courtesy. "As to the published stories about them, I delight in your journalists principally because of the magic genius of imagination I find in so much of their work. A *tong* terrible? A *tong* lawless? How could it be in this land of law and order and enlightenment?"

"I just knew such things couldn't be true right here in San Francisco," Mrs. Raycroft-Smith managed to reply before she was edged out of earshot by her fellow-club-members.

A full half-hour passed before Lee Sat Kan managed to escape to his waiting limousine, where he wearily ejaculated the Chinese equivalent of, "Home, James!" to his Oriental chauffeur.

Inside his abode in the Chinese quarter Lee Sat Kan passed rapidly through the rooms, and beyond them through many doors and passages, until he stood again in the *tong* room. A servant was waiting with his master's priceless embroidered robe of supreme authority.

And as it fell upon his shoulders, Lee Sat Kan the courteous, university-bred lecturer of the Parthenon Club vanished. In his stead stood Lee Sat Kan, Chinaman in thought, speech and conscience, at whose command a dozen silently obedient *tong*-men rapidly prepared the Four Brothers' welcome for its guest, Uleaborg the Finn, above whose name in the black Book of Justice were written eight blood-red symbols of as many unexpiated murders.

AS they faced each other across an exquisitely carved teak-wood table, Uleaborg the Finn, captain and owner of the smuggling sloop *Vasa*, and Lee Sat Kan, *tong* chieftain, were precise opposites in everything in which men may be different.

See them: On one side of the table Uleaborg, unkempt in body and dress, with broad, flat head bristling with close-cropped black hair; narrow-set, crafty eyes looking out from above meaty jowls; the soft shirt-collar about his great, bull-throated neck turned down, revealing a hairy breast; beneath, his squat but magnificently massive body by whose giant's strength he was a master of lesser men. And on the other side the Chinese *tong*-man, slender, lithe, scrupulously groomed and magnificent in his almost regal robes of office—an epitome of the intellectuality that made him, also, a master of men.

Each was inwardly contemptuous of the source of the other's power as their eyes met across the table.

"Come on, Chink, spread yer sails. Wha'for you want chin-chin?" rumbled Uleaborg impatiently.

Lee Sat Kan ignored the affronting appellation, but as he heard, he instinctively removed his huge horn-rimmed glasses—by which act, had Uleaborg been a psychologist familiar with Chinese custom, he might have known the *tong* master; for the moment was truly and entirely Oriental. Only Chinese hold the wearing of glasses in the presence of a guest to be a dis-

courtesy, and in the moments when his Caucasian education governed, no such unconscious impulse could have moved Lee Sat Kan.

"Quickly I shall spread my sail, illustrious Captain—spread it upon a voyage of much moment even to me and to you," answered the Chinese softly. His words were the pure speech of his American alma mater, but phrased in twisted idiom in surrender to the Orientalism of the thoughts behind them.

At a tap from Lee's finger, a noiseless servant served rice liquor in tiny Ming bowls. Uleaborg quaffed his thirstily. The *tong* chief sipped.

"My words shall be direct as a straight road," he began. "Well hidden upon a certain beach of San Clemente Island are a thousand cans of opium, worth in this *tong* room one hundred thousand dollars—worth on San Clemente, nothing. Your wisdom in such matters is deep, Master of All Cunning."

ULEABORG strove to conceal the greediness that consumed him. A thousand cans of opium landed in San Francisco spelled wealth. What need to share that wealth with a despised Chinese? Once possessed of the secret of its hiding-place, the treasure was his own. His crafty purpose, instantly formed, of seizing all for himself, glittered in the Finn's eyes. Lee Sat Kan read his companion's mind but gave no sign of his knowledge as they bargained.

Both liquor-bowls were emptied, and the Chinese tapped and spoke a command. A slippered menial set a decanter between them. Uleaborg poured a drink, half-raised it to his lips and then slowly set it down.

Without reason he sensed something unseen but threatening—sensed it solely by that sixth intuitive perception that was the heritage of his dominantly animal nature. He reached for Lee Sat Kan's empty bowl, filled it from the decanter and transferred his own brimming bowl to the elbow of the *tong* chieftain.

"There's luck in a changed cup," he explained, his eyes narrowing. Then commandingly: "Drink that licker, Chink."

Lee Sat Kan drank it to the final drop. The Finn's suspicions were lulled, but again as he raised his bowl, an insistent warning stayed his hand. They continued to argue of risks and of guarantees and of money.

"A thousan' gold paid in hand. The rest when I deliver—that's my last word," urged Uleaborg.

"Done," agreed Lee with seeming reluctance. "Come. Together we shall count your many cash. Then will I give you a map showing the hiding-place of the *lai yuen*."

The Chinese led the way to a massive brass-bound strong-box that filled one corner of the room. Jubilant exultation curled the lips of Uleaborg the Finn as he followed.

Then, as the two left the table, a yellow hand reached silently out from behind the wall tapestries and set another filled Ming bowl in the place of Uleaborg's.

Lee Sat Kan took a heavy, clinking pouch from among the many that lay within his money-chest—also a folded parchment.

"Together we shall count that which is yours," he repeated, returning to the table, where he opened the pouch and poured forth gold coins. The Finn's great hands reached out greedily to clink them. Lee Sat Kan refilled his bowl from the decanter and raised it invitingly to his lips.

"To success, most welcome of guests," he offered, and emptied the bowl.

And then Uleaborg, deaf now to the warning of the voice within, drank the cup before him.

Lee Sat Kan unrolled the parchment. The Finn, bending forward with eager eyes, saw only a column of Chinese characters topped by eight crimson claws.

"Whadda them mean?" he demanded, staring at the paper. "That aint no map."

"Even so, those eight symbols shall guide you unfailingly to the place where you shall go," answered the *tong*-man with slow surety. "Listen well. Off the south shore of Anacapa—"

"Anacapa?"

"Aye, Anacapa, man of mighty muscle! Off the south shore of Anacapa there lie eight chests eagerly awaiting your coming. In deep water and great silence they await you. For twelve moons have they—"

With shocked amazement Uleaborg realized that Lee Sat Kan's voice had become a droning hum. He snapped his drooping head erect and saw the room and all within it reel fantastically before his blurred eyes. Now the warning voice thundered in his

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The Finn's great hands reached out greedily to clink them.

ears with the roar of an angry surf. He struggled lurchingly to his feet and clutched with a murderously groping hand for the Chinese face that swirled before him.

"Yaller devil—yaller devil—yaller—"

Uleaborg's voice failed. Far away and silhouetted unforgettably against a gathering cloud of blackness, the Finn saw the face of the master of the Four Brothers—a contemptuous face, calmly victorious. Then darkness enveloped him.

Lee Sat Kan arose and stood beside his antagonist, looking down upon his helpless bulk of beef and bone with a conqueror's disdain.

"A swine," he murmured. "Aye, a swine of giant's strength and child's wisdom. The justice of the *tong* lies heavily upon him."

At a clap of his hand, twice repeated, a half-dozen servitors poured into the room.

"Take yonder doomed one below to the Chamber of Death," he commanded. "There bind him foot and hand strongly with braided withes, for his strength is the strength of six full-bodied men. Set over him a watch, and when his mind returns from its journey upon the Waters of Sleep, summon me."

Lee passed beyond the draped walls, slipped his *tong* robe from his shoulders, and entering his private library, settled himself comfortably in an American-made lounging chair with a leather-bound copy of "Representative Men." He was still reading, hours later, when they summoned him to Uleaborg the Finn.

Uleaborg lay upon a plank with arms and feet outstretched and bound each to a steel post. Twisted cords, strong as wire, held his neck upon the pallet. Hoarse curses came from his lips as Lee Sat Kan looked upon his contorted face.

"Silence thy vain mouthings, doomed one, and hear the words of Lee Sat Kan, Master of the Four Brothers, for shortly that privilege shall be denied thee," the Chinese commanded, his speech reverting unconsciously to a literal translation of his own tongue. "Twelve moons have grown old since the evil deed was done that has brought upon thee the just vengeance of the law of the *tong*. Off the southern shore of Anacapa the angry god of the Sacred Temple watched thy crime. There, having taken gold to bring them even here to the land of the *fan quai*, thou cast into the sea eight of my countrymen; and the ninth—a slave-girl—flung herself upon the waves to escape thee. These murders thou did, freely choosing that black deed rather than capture and punishment for smuggling thy passengers, at the hands of the white *suey gon how* who swiftly pursued thee."

"You lie," screamed Uleaborg. "I set 'em adrift in a life-boat."

"Futile is thy denial. The proof is complete. The girl was saved by a fisherman of this *tong* and has told with full truth the deed of thine her eyes saw. Through the murder in thy heart on that day the sleepless spirits of the eight who lie unhallowed beneath the Great Waters cry out for justice. Uleaborg, that cry must be answered. A life for a life—that is the law of the *tong*. But thou, with eight murders unexpiated and but a single life to give, art a bankrupt. Dying, you leave a seven-fold debt still unpaid. Not so is justice fulfilled. Hear, then, the judgment which I pronounce upon thee."

Lee Sat Kan paused and looked down without hatred into the glaring eyes of his captive.

"Uleaborg, for the murders of thy evil hands, thy body shall now die and rot away from thy bones. But thy mind and thy memory shall not die. In thy grave with the body of a skeleton and the mind of a living man thou shalt awake and know where thou art and wherefore thou art there. That moment of awakening and understanding is thy punishment."

NEVER had Uleaborg feared man, either living or dead. Never had he flinched, even in the face of imminent death. But at the solemn words of horror spoken by his implacable accuser, he felt terror grip his soul—terror of the unknown and unimaginable.

"Bah! To damnation with you an' yer witch-tricks," he cried, though his hair bristled and icy beads of dread stood upon his brow. "Loose them damn ropes an' I'll battle a hundred Chinks single-handed."

With all the power of his mighty muscles Uleaborg strained against his bonds until even the solid plank upon which he lay groaned under the strain. The cords cut into his flesh but neither stretched nor broke. At last he lay back panting, exhausted, beaten.

At a word of command from Lee Sat Kan, a man masked by a red hood that completely covered his face approached and sprayed

a liquid of sweetish, sickening odor over the Finn's nostrils. As the drugged air penetrated to his lungs with gasping breath, Uleaborg felt his strength ebb.

"Remember the judgment of the law! Remember thy ending! The body of a skeleton, the mind of a living man," repeated the *tong* leader mercilessly.

Uleaborg tried to struggle, but the power of his body was gone. The body of a skeleton! The mind of a man! The inconceivable horror of the thought burned itself upon his brain as he sank into unconsciousness.

"Proceed, Magician of the Red Mask, and let thy will be done with the wisdom and the skill of all thy forefathers," commanded the master. The hooded one bowed low.

And then for many minutes he worked upon the helpless body of Uleaborg, using with care and infinite skill many tiny instruments of strange pattern and purpose.

THE heavy pall of unconsciousness that covered the body of the Finn lifted and thinned, like fog before a blowing sea-wind. He moaned, though he felt no pain, and struggled desperately for memory.

A damp subterranean chill was in the air. Where was he? What had befallen him? His blurred mind groped with the enigma. His first definite impression was of a face—a Chinese face that looked into his with stern relentlessness. He remembered now. The face was Lee Sat Kan's. In the *tong*-room he had drunk liquor; he had been drugged, seized, bound.

And then with remembrance came understanding of words suddenly realized were thrumming in endless repetition through his brain.

"Remember thy awakening! The body of a skeleton, the mind of a living man."

Those were the words. Impossible words—lying words, he was alive and unharmed. Uleaborg opened his eyes.

A faint, phosphorescent light that glowed and fell and glowed again was all about him. Joined boards were above his head. At each side were other boards that pressed close upon him. He realized that he lay upon his back in a plain pine box.

As he comprehended the dread significance of his prison Uleaborg cried out and willed to raise his hands and burst it open. But his hands did not answer the command of his brain. He strove to struggle, to rise, to move even a finger, yet lay motionless and impotent in the great silence that surrounded him.

"Thy body shall die, but thy mind and memory shall not die."

Thus Lee Sat Kan had spoken; Uleaborg remembered the words. Slowly, fearfully he turned his eyes downward along his body.

Beneath the rotted shroud that covered him, his hands were crossed upon his breast, and they were the fleshless hands of a skeleton.

Uleaborg shrieked.

"Oh, God! Oh, God ha' mercy!" he begged.

The tight-pressing box echoed to the sound of his despairing voice; the phosphorescent flicker of light rose and fell upon the bony horrors that lay upon his breast; and Uleaborg the Finn, shrinking abjectly from that which was part of himself, knew that the prophecy of Lee Sat Kan had been fulfilled. With the mind and memory of a living man he lay alone with his own skeleton.

He screamed again in terror. He shrieked; he shouted; he even prayed; but always when his unwilling eyes turned downward, hoping though hope was dead, the motionless hands were there, convincing, unescapable.

Not for long may man's brain endure such torture. The frenzied cries culminated at last in a peal of maniacal laughter; and Uleaborg, in his narrow prison, gibbered inarticulately in the relief of dethroned reason.

As his saneless laughter echoed through the underground vault, a Chinese who had waited in the darkness ascended to the *tong* room of the Four Brothers.

"O All-powerful Master, the pronouncement of thy justice has been fulfilled," he announced to Lee Sat Kan. "He who lies in the Chamber of Death no longer speaks with the voice of reason, and his laughter is the laughter of the Dwellers of the Darkness who have claimed his mind."

"So was it intended," answered the chieftain. "With mine own eyes I shall witness this fulfillment of the sacred law, and then he shall be dealt with as has been commanded."

Carrying a torch, Lee Sat Kan entered the subterranean chamber and lifted the unfastened lid of the pine box. With no vestige of pity he looked down upon the creature who lay babbling within it. No light of recognition was in the eyes that stared blankly

By Jack Boyle



"The body of a skeleton, the mind of a living man," repeated the tong leader.

back at the *tong* chief. No slightest twitch of movement disturbed the quietude of the inert body beneath the shroud. Uleaborg the Masterful had become Uleaborg the Powerless.

"Even now as in the reign of the Fourth Manchu," Lee murmured. He reached within the coffin and lifted the shroud, and with it two phosphorus-coated skeleton hands skillfully fashioned of papier mâché. Exposed now, was Uleaborg's body, as magnificently perfect as ever to the eye, but bereft of the power of motion.

"Take him hence," the Chinese commanded. "Well, indeed, has the judgment of the *tong* law been fulfilled."

LEE SAT KAN had dined with Dr. Herschel McDermott, foremost among American surgeons. They were lingering over coffee and cigars when the guest interrupted the chartless voyaging of his host's mind.

"My friend, your thoughts travel far afield this evening," he said. "What so occupies them—a problem in chess, a new discovery in the realm of surgery?"

Dr. McDermott roused himself and murmured an apology.

"I've been puzzling over the most inexplicable and interesting case in my medical experience, Lee," he replied. "Have you seen the afternoon papers? No? Well, (Continued on page 128)

EVERY MAN HAS HIS PRICE

By
MRS. WILSON
WOODROW

Illustrated by ROBERT W. STEWART



One of her hands slipped into his...

THE miniature sun in the traffic-tower at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street was sharply snuffed out, to be succeeded by the warning red; then the green light gleamed like an emerald against the soft, thick dusk of the November evening. In obedience to the signals, the two streams of motors flowing up and down the Avenue came to an automatic stop.

Of the northbound cars, the one which halted nearest the curb was a big gray limousine which Wallace Ramsey, who stood waiting to cross, would have recognized at once even if his attention had not been caught and held by one of its occupants, a girl who, at the pause, leaned forward and glanced over the sidewalk throngs.

Her eyes encountered his for a second and then swept on. But for Ramsey it was one of those fleeting moments which come to all of us, when the world about us seems suddenly phantasmagorical and unreal. Autumn twilight, the hurrying crowds, the traffic lights, the prismatic colors of shop-windows disappeared; and Ramsey was on April slopes where hyacinths filled the spring air with their fragrance, and flowering branches lay against a pale, clear sky.

The girl had turned again to the man beside her, whom Ramsey now recognized as Heywood Achison. Her manner toward him was one of joyous confidence, and she seemed to be plying him with excited questions broken by happy laughter. Achison, bland and smiling, his gray head bent toward her, was answering them with indulgent, pleased amusement; and Ramsey, with a feeling of unreasonable resentment, saw that one of her hands was slipped into his. Then the signals flashed again, and they drove on.

Ramsey walked on up the street, his mind still rankling with indignant protest. A girl like that with Achison! Athene and a satyr! His April slopes had melted into the crass reality of Fifth Avenue, but against a murky background her face still bloomed. Who was she? Possibly a relative. The thought was consolatory. Achison was a bachelor, but bachelors did often have nieces.

Ramsey had taken a long, aimless stroll, and now he realized that the dinner-hour was passing, and that in spite of his pre-occupation he was hungry; so he stopped at one of the hotels and went into the grill-room. Near the door some one hailed him. It was Howard Brown, a newspaper man of his acquaintance.

"I was just wishing some one would come in," said Brown. "I'm all alone; why don't you join me?"

"Glad to," returned Ramsey, and took the opposite chair.

"No dinner of herbs for me tonight," laughed Brown presently, indicating the array of dishes before him. "I've got to stoke up the old engine. There's work ahead, and a long, cold drive behind me. I've just got back from looking over Achison's ruined bungalow."

"Achison's ruined bungalow?" repeated Ramsey, staring at him. "What do you mean?"

Brown picked up the evening paper beside his plate and handed it across the table, pointing to a brief article on the front page.

"They only gave it a couple of sticks," he said contentedly. "It's good for headlines in my sheet tomorrow morning."

Ramsey hastily read the paragraph which stated that the country home of Mr. Heywood Achison, the distinguished lawyer and art-collector, had been burned to the ground shortly after noon, and it was reported that a painting of great value had been lost in the flames. This had not been verified, however, as it was impossible to locate Mr. Achison before going to press.

Anything that pertained to Achison was of interest to Ramsey, but he had his own reasons for not showing that fact too patently.

"Too bad!" He tried to make his comment carefully casual.

"What's behind it? Not much news-value in the mere burning of a bungalow out in Jersey."

"The backbone of the story," said Brown, cutting into a thick steak with its accompanying onions, "is, so to speak, a 'fade-in.' We must flash back to the Edgewater collection. Ever hear of it? No?" Ramsey had made a negative gesture. "I forgot that you are more or less a newcomer among us."

"Well,—I'll have to talk between bites,—Edgewater was a queer old bird, very eccentric. He was one of the figures of New York back in the seventies and eighties—made a pile of money off a shoe-string, and when he had properly salted it down, started off on a grand tour. But instead of going around the world as he had planned, he lingered in France and Italy, got the picture craze, and developed a passion for collecting."

"After he came home, he still had agents buying for him on the other side, and was always a high bidder at the really important sales here. But when anything passed into his hands, it was seen no more."



They drove on. Ramsey walked up the street, his mind rankling with protest. A girl like that with Achison!

"He had a big house opposite the Park, on the east side, with the windows barred like a jail; for he was a morose, misanthropic old devil who lived in constant dread of his treasures being stolen. And this obsession deepened as time went on, until finally in a fit of violent insanity he actually set fire to his enormous gallery.

"When the firemen broke into the house, he was found dying in a corridor just outside the door of the picture gallery, overcome by the smoke and too far gone to be resuscitated. A few of the pictures were saved—chiefly the less valuable ones, I believe.

"His widow, who had found it impossible to live with him, was in a sanitarium at the time. She is still alive, I understand, although a great sufferer from rheumatism. And she got practically nothing from the estate, as Edgewater had squandered his entire fortune on his pictures and they were gone—insurance inoperative, of course, under the circumstances. All she has had to support her since his death was what she could get from an occasional sale of one or another of the small lot of pictures.

"Among these, so the story goes, was a genuine, though unestablished, Velasquez. Achison—you know what a bug he is on that sort of thing—got on the trail of it and several months ago bought it from her, probably for a song.

"That was the picture that went up in smoke today. I might"—he paused, with a forkful of salad halfway to his mouth—"work up something lurid about the curse on the Edgewater collection."

"A Velasquez?" repeated Ramsey incredulously, quite ignoring the last bright idea. "And a connoisseur like Achison left it in a frame bungalow out in the wilds? But that's absurd."

"Well, people do queer things," said Brown with the philosophy engendered by a long newspaper experience. "And the picture must have been something pretty good, for one of the insurance men tipped me off that Achison had it insured pretty near up to the limit. They were poking around in the ruins and quizzing the caretaker when I got there.

"Besides, it's not so very remarkable that the picture should have been left there under the circumstances." He sipped his coffee appreciatively. "They make the best coffee in town at this place."

"Under the circumstances? What circumstances?" Ramsey's tone was slightly irritable.

"Why, Achison only left the place himself last week, so the caretaker tells me. And you know what it is to get a moving-van now, with this strike on. He finally sent one out day before yesterday, and they brought back a lot of his bric-à-brac and books and water-colors and one thing and another. But somehow this picture wasn't on the list the driver had—didn't want it handled with the other stuff, I suppose—so they were to make a special trip after it this afternoon.

"Seems like fate, in a way." He shook his head. "Of course, the thing, as I say, is heavily insured; but Achison's too rich to care about that. I'll bet he's tearing his hair right now over the loss of his Velasquez."

RAMSEY recalled Achison's face as he had seen it less than an hour before. If the owner of the picture were bereaved over his loss, he had certainly concealed it admirably.

"How the deuce the bungalow ever caught on fire is a mystery." Brown had lighted a cigarette and was leaning back in his chair. "If the caretaker is telling the truth, it must have started on the inside; but nobody had entered the house since he was in there two days ago with the moving-van men. A dropped match or carelessly flung cigarette couldn't possibly have smoldered that long. Neither was it caused by tramps; the man had been about the premises all morning, and he insists that the heavy wooden shutters which covered the windows were intact, and the doors all chained and padlocked. There was no sign or smell of smoke; in fact, he left the place without the slightest feeling of apprehension. But he hadn't got more than a quarter of a mile away before, happening to turn around, he saw the flames bursting through the roof. He hurried back with the idea of telephoning to the village and getting help, but the flimsy building burned like tinder, and almost before he got there, it was practically destroyed.

"I'm anxious to hear what Achison has to say about the affair," added the newspaper man, glancing at his watch. "I have an appointment with him at half-past eight at his club. Guess I'll be starting."

"I was just going up there myself," said Ramsey mendaciously. "I'll walk along with you."

They covered the short distance to the clubhouse in a few minutes, and went in. By what Ramsey considered rare good

luck, Achison was standing just inside the door talking to one of the club attachés as they entered.

He looked up, lifting his heavy brows a little as he saw Ramsey, then came forward and shook hands with the two men.

"How do you do, Mr. Brown? I'm on time, you see. Ah, Ramsey? I am glad to see you, and not greatly surprised. You have a faculty of always turning up when I am in any trouble. The test of true friendship, eh, Mr. Brown?"

"Come in here"—he motioned toward a room on the left—"where we can talk." Then as Ramsey drew back as if to leave them, he laid a hand on the young man's arm. "Come along," he said genially; "this is no star-chamber session."

Ramsey, who looked below surface indications when he matched wits with Achison, divined behind that blandly courteous mask an arrogant triumph, a contemptuous assurance which made the lawyer's request that he be present at the interview more of a challenge than an invitation. And a challenge from Achison, even though it had not coincided with his inclination, Ramsey was unable to refuse.

"You've had quite a loss today, Mr. Achison?" said Brown as they seated themselves.

Achison at once became serious, even glum.

"Indeed, yes." He drew a sigh. "A man doesn't lose a great work of art without some very acute twinges of regret—nor, for that matter, a bungalow of which one is particularly fond. The house of course can be replaced, but the painting!" He lifted his shoulders, the corners of his mouth dragging down. "A heap of ashes!"

"Have you been out there yet?"

"Yes; I drove out as soon as I heard the news. Not a pleasant journey, I assure you. I haven't been able to shake off the depression since."

He spoke with the air of a man who has sustained a real and unexpected blow, his expression regretful and a bit stern; but Ramsey, who knew his histrionic ability, watched him with skeptical eyes.

none of the doors or windows had been tampered with. Then the idea struck me that he himself might have lighted a fire to burn rubbish, but he denies that just as strenuously—says that he has not been in the house for two days. So the only conclusion left me is that the blaze must have resulted from some break or defective insulation in the electric wiring."

"That seems feasible enough," nodded Brown. "But how on

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"Both the picture and the house were insured, I understand?"

"Oh, yes. But when a thing of beauty is destroyed, money seems a poor recompense."

"I suppose," he went on bitterly, "I was a fool to take the picture out there; but I was working hard during the summer and early fall, and I enjoyed the quiet and repose of the place. Call me a sybarite, if you will,"—he smiled in deprecation of his weakness,—"but I must be surrounded by beautiful objects. They not only rest and refresh, but stimulate me; and this Velasquez, not a large picture, by the way, hung in my bedroom where I could see it the last thing before I turned off the light at night and the first thing when I awoke in the morning."

"It meant a lot to you, I can see," Brown murmured sympathetically, but quickly reverted to his dominant news instinct.

"What was the cause of the fire, in your opinion, Mr. Achison?"

"Ah, there you have me. I confess I'm at sea. My first thought was that it must have been the work of an incendiary, possibly some criminal who held me responsible for his conviction. But the fire started from the inside; and old Fred, the caretaker, whom I have always found very reliable, swears that

earth, Mr. Achison, did you ever come to leave a picture of so great value in that empty house and exposed to such hazards?"

Achison spread out his thick white fingers.

"That," he said, "comes in the category of questions which most of us are asking ourselves every day. 'Why did I do this?' 'How could I have done that?' 'Why should I have been so incredibly careless?' I can only explain it by telling you that my mind has been almost completely absorbed by an important case which comes up for trial within a few days."

"Surely," conceded the newspaper man. "I know how that goes. After the horse is stolen, it's easy enough to realize that we should have locked the stable door."

"And now just one more question, Mr. Achison." He hesitated. "I hope you won't be offended; but I was talking to one of the big art-dealers this afternoon, and found him rather inclined to cast doubts on the genuineness of this picture. To put it plainly, he regarded the claim for it as a real Velasquez as a good deal of a joke. He paid you a number of compliments, said that you were an undoubted connoisseur with a real flair for paintings, but that everyone was taken in now and again, and

By Mrs. Wilson Woodrow

that no experts so far as he knew had ever passed on this work. He asserts that every true Velasquez is listed. They are chiefly in the great galleries, a few in private collections in England, and fewer in America. He admits that Edgewater might have bought a picture attributed to Velasquez, and following his custom, have hidden it away; but he says he can't imagine your doing the same thing."

Achison curled his lip contemptuously, but the color rose to his face.

"To tell the truth," he said, "I had intended showing the picture this winter; it would have created a stir. But, my dear Brown, suppose, answering the argument of your friend the

companied the words that again stirred Ramsey with a sense of challenge and decided him to remain. Achison had once more flung down the gauntlet; and, no weapon in his hand, nothing to go on but the vaguest suspicion, the other promptly took it up.

"I'm staying," he said, as the newspaper man disappeared through the door. "But not to play bridge. I'm not in the mood for cards tonight."

"Neither am I," returned Achison, a twinkle showing in his eye. "It's far more fun to talk to you. I can see, dear boy, that you are off on the scent again, convinced that I am guilty of arson and that you are the divine instrument of retribution to bring me to justice. This continual chase must keep you rather breathless; but you're a persevering lad, and it's good exercise for you, even though you never can and never will get anywhere."

"No?" Ramsey settled himself more deeply in his chair and crossed his knees, lightly quoting: "They also serve, who only stand and wait." The quality that insures success, Achison," he went on, "is the staying power. And I am with you to the bitter end."

"I am afraid it will indeed be the bitter end for you." The lawyer lighted a cigarette, and threw one arm carelessly over the back of his chair.

"I listened closely to you and Brown," said Ramsey deliberately, "and the longer I listened, the more my conviction grew that there is something crooked in this affair."

"You would think that, under any circumstances," Achison broke in.

"I don't believe for one moment that you ever left a valuable picture in a deserted house, without intending it to burn," Ramsey retorted stubbornly.

"I could have prompted you on that statement," Achison observed. "I know so well the workings of your mind. You no doubt label it: 'A logical conclusion deduced from what I know of Achison's character.'"

"But considering the evidence at hand, I wish you would kindly enlighten me as to how I could possibly have had any complicity in the

matter. Eliminating my theory of defective wiring, a house does not burn from the inside unless it is set on fire; and the caretaker declares that no one had entered the place for two days.

"Of course he might have been bribed by a wicked employer to perjure himself on that score." His mouth twitched with satiric laughter. "I can imagine poor old Fred in the hands of the insurance adjusters. If he had been trying to conceal anything, they would have muddled him so in three minutes that he couldn't have told his own name straight. He'd have simply broken down at about the sixth question, and have confessed the whole immoral plot."

If Achison's object was to nettles or incense Ramsey by these verbal banderillos, he did not succeed.

"Let us dismiss Fred from the discussion," the latter said evenly. "No use in wasting time on him. You are a host in yourself, when it comes to conceiving and carrying out plans."

"You flatter me," Achison bowed with mock humility. "But I submit that I am only human. Did I fly through the air to accomplish this fell deed? Ah, Ramsey, it is a great mistake to permit suspicion to warp your judgment so as to give undue importance to a few careless words or actions."

"Quite true," Ramsey agreed. "But you are the last man on earth, Achison, to be careless of a great art treasure, and the last man to keep that treasure from the sight of experts and collectors."

"Hah!" Achison sat upright. "But what was the motive in it all? Tell me that. Do you think that I was in need of money, and hatched a scheme to defraud the insurance companies? Is

"Miss Edgewater," Achison said, "I want to introduce Mr. Wallace Ramsey. I have an idea he will be a good person for you to consult in making your plans."

art-dealer, that you were a judge of pearls and had stumbled on one of rare value? Would you run about from one jeweler to another, inquiring if it were genuine?" He looked down arrogantly at the two men through half-closed eyes.

"Egotistical though I may appear, I regard myself as an expert. Why should I have a lot of fellows for whose opinions I hold very little respect, pawing over my picture and giving their owlish pronouncements? The only man beside myself whose judgment I would trust has been out of the country for some time. But I will insist with my last breath that the picture which was burned today was a genuine Velasquez, a copy of the celebrated 'Lady with a Fan,' in part the work of a pupil, but unquestionably finished by the master himself."

"Well, I won't question its validity, anyhow," Brown smiled as he got up. "That would spoil the story. Thank you very much, Mr. Achison. Staying on, Ramsey?"

"Yes. He's going to play bridge with me," Achison spoke before Ramsey had a chance to answer. "I need to have my mind diverted; and Ramsey, as I said before, is a true friend."

There was something in the lazy, taunting glance which ac-



that what you are hinting at? Suppose you go down and talk to my bankers; I'll give you a note instructing them to grant you all the information you want regarding my finances."

Was he bluffing? Ramsey decided to call.

"Perhaps I'll take you up on that," he said. "I might use it, although I hardly think so. The clue to this mystery doesn't lie there." He frowned thoughtfully. "There's something else, something behind it all; and I warn you, Achison, that I'll never let up until I find out what it is."

Achison gave one of his characteristic chuckles.

"You amuse me so much that I could almost pay you for your bloodhound pursuit of me. Give you the slightest circumstance on which to hang a suspicion against me, and you are off like—"

"It isn't entirely suspicion, in this instance," Ramsey interrupted. "I know the state of mind you would be in, if you had lost a genuine Velasquez in such a way. But you are exultant rather than cast down. When I saw you earlier this evening, I thought you had never seemed in better spirits."

Achison appeared as bland as ever; but he was on guard at once, and Ramsey knew it.

"When you saw me earlier this evening?" he repeated. "And where was that?"

"When your car was halted near the curb at Fifth Avenue and Forty-Second Street at about six o'clock. You were accompanied by a young girl."

"Ah, yes." The mask fell over Achison's face. "So I was."

Ramsey was disappointed. He had not expected to learn anything very definite about the girl, but he had hoped at least for some clue to her identity; for he was determined to discover who she was, and what was the nature of her association with Achison.

He waited for some further comment from the lawyer; but Achison was silently noncommittal. The malicious zest which had sparkled in his eyes all during their verbal fencing-match had now flickered out. Ramsey's mention of the girl had evidently given him something to think about. Achison's self-control was too perfect for him to show any outward manifestation of it, but the other knew that he was perturbed. Perhaps a minute passed; then Ramsey picked up his hat.

"Nothing more to be gained from you, is there?"

"Nothing," said Achison absently; but realizing that he was possibly revealing more than he cared to in his manner, he added quickly with an assumption of his former humor: "Sorry I can't break down and make a confession, Ramsey; but I'm too sleepy for hysterics. *Au revoir!*"

Ramsey had learned nothing tangible from the interview, and yet he departed feeling more convinced than ever that the burning of the bungalow was far from the purely accidental happening that it appeared on its face.

In the continuing duel that went on between himself and Achison, intuition played its part. The things that were unsaid often counted more than the things that were said. While talking to Brown, the lawyer had simulated great depression of spirits, but in the later conversation with himself had thrown off all pretense of it. Ramsey felt that if Achison had really sustained

the loss he claimed, he would have been in no mood for such light sparring. And more significant still, whatever the lawyer's position was, he had felt quite secure in it until the girl was mentioned. Then he immediately became cautious and reticent.

The girl? Where did she fit into the puzzle? The mere recollection of her made Ramsey recoil from connecting her even in thought with Achison's tortuous activities. He reflected upon the momentary impression he had had of her—her gay excitement, her eager questions, her evident confidence in her companion. And yet he was positive that she was not of Achison's world. He recalled the shabbily gloved hand she had laid on the window of the limousine, her worn coat.

To search for her among New York's multitudes would be like looking for a needle in a haystack; and yet in some way he would, he must meet her. But before he entered on this quest, he determined to make a thorough investigation among the ruins of the bungalow; for he was now beginning to doubt very seriously if there had been any picture there at the time of the fire.

Of course, the chances were strongly against finding any clue that would aid him, so complete was the destruction of the building, according to all reports. Still, Ramsey was a persistent fellow, who was never satisfied to overlook any possibility, and he had all the courage of his curiosity. Quite early the next morning he crossed the river and went into the Jersey hills.

When Ramsey finally reached Achison's place, he was rather dismayed at the sight which met his eyes. The flames had done their work even more thoroughly than he had supposed. There was little left of the bungalow but a heap of cinders.

There was no one in authority about except the old caretaker, who was busily engaged in straightening out the yard, overrun and trampled in the excitement of the day before, and he paid no heed as Ramsey alighted from his car and strolled over to take a look at the ruins. The villagers had all satisfied their curiosity, and the only persons now at the scene were a half-dozen or so small boys from the neighborhood who were grimly turning over the debris in the search of treasure trove.

As Ramsey came up, one of them had just dug out the circular, concave reflector of an electric heater which had survived the fire better than might have been expected. The protecting strands of wire across the face of it were still intact, but strangely enough, the "heating-element" was missing.

One of the lads to whom such a contraption was evidently familiar hurried off to a little pile of salvage they had hitherto collected, and came back with the missing part, a round, spool-like coil with two strands of insulated wire still attached to it. What especially attracted Ramsey's attention, however, was the fact that to each of the strands of wire, at about equal distance from the heating-element, clung two charred and blackened pieces of wood.

Excitedly he snatched the apparatus from the boy and examined these carefully. There could be no doubt about it; those two charred bits of wood were fragments of a

picture frame.

He turned again to the reflector and studied it and the heating-section in conjunction. They belonged together; that was obvious. Moreover the heating-section had not been fused or melted away from its place by the fierceness of the fire; it had been removed by human agency.

"Where did you find these two parts," Ramsey questioned the boys, "—anywhere near together?"

"Oh, no, sir," volunteered the one who had recovered the reflector. "I found this here round thing right yonder where the bathroom was; and Jimmy, he found that spool way over there under what was the bedroom."

(Continued on page 156)



"Where did you find these two parts," Ramsey questioned, "—anywhere near together?"

CONFLICT

By

CLARENCE
BUDINGTON
KELLAND

Illustrated by
FRANK STREET

CHAPTER X

"Bitter—bitterer'n aloes!
D'ye s'pose—"

The story so far:

DORCAS REMALIE found herself, by the terms of her wealthy father's will, placed at his death under the guardianship of her uncle John Remalie, a New England lumber king who for twenty-five years had lived in a big, grim stone house with only his housekeeper Miss Labo for company—and in all those twenty-five years they had never exchanged a word.

Dorcas had no choice but to submit to existence in this dreary household for the time. The dullness was occasionally relieved by an encounter with a quaint character named Orrin Lakin, or with an attractive but apparently unemployed young lumberjack called Jevons, who distinguished himself by defeating Remalie's straw-boss Sloane in a fight—Sloane, whom Miss Labo invited to the house and introduced to Dorcas.

And then Dorcas learned the secret of that strange grim house—overheard Miss Labo talking with a young man while Remalie was absent. John Remalie, it seemed, had carried on an "affair" with Miss Labo in his youth, although he was engaged to another young woman. When he learned from Miss Labo that there was to be a child, he insisted that it be put out of the way. Miss Labo pretended to agree and told Remalie the child had been murdered, while she had it cared for secretly. As the price of silence, she had compelled him to break off his engagement and support her. . . . The young man to whom Miss Labo was talking was, she told him, the child—her son. Later Dorcas heard Miss Labo's visitor leaving and looked out the window to recognize Jevons!

Jevons now appeared as a rival to Remalie—bought a tract of timber, set up a sawmill and brought in workmen who had served with him as foresters in France. And now Remalie received another blow: in a moment of anger Dorcas told him what she had overheard—that his son still lived, that he was none other, she added, than the rival lumber operator Jevons.

JOHAN REMALIE was alone. He had not seemed to notice the departure of Dorcas from the room after she uttered the name of Jevons. If he noticed it, he did not care. He was dazed, bewildered. For twenty-odd years he had lived in constant terror of hell-fire, and with the self-inflicted brand *Murderer* upon his brow. Now he was like one awakening from a dreadful nightmare—still held by the horror of the dream, and only vaguely realizing it was a dream. He experienced a relief that was akin to joy.

But it was not in John Remalie's nature to be joyful. His first objective thought, clear and coherent, was of the motto in his office. He visualized it; its black letters, always threatening him with the text: "*Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,*" stood before him as if physically present. It enraged him. That motto had been symbolical; it had been the outward manifestation of the torment he endured. The first effort of his will, reacting from shock, was directed upon it. The destruction of it would mark the revolution in his life. John Remalie almost purred over the thought. He would tear it from his wall; obliterate it utterly.

With the passing of the old horror, there came a new impulse. It was not one of gratitude; it was not a gracious impulse, nor a kindly impulse, nor a righteous impulse. The place left vacant was occupied, and Remalie scrutinized the new tenant. It was *Hatred*—hatred of the son who had no right to have been born! He placed the blame for the cold sweats of agony suffered of nights, for a score of years, upon Jevons. It was as if Jevons had tortured him deliberately.

He reflected. How should he confront this new state of his affairs? What steps should he take? What facts were in his hands by which he might guide his judgment? The first fact to attract him was that Jevons was unaware of his father's knowledge of his identity. That was a valuable fact. Miss Labo—he thought of her now for the first time—was also unaware of his penetration of her secret. Very well! Neither of them should know that he knew—until he was ready to inform them in his own way.

Miss Labo had imposed herself upon him for years as his accomplice. He had not fed and clothed her in feeble justice to the wrong suffered by her. Always he had regarded it as blackmail paid. He had kept her, tolerated her, because he feared her guilty knowledge. The thought that she had imposed upon his credulity for a quarter of a century enraged him. When he came

to a clearing up of this matter, he would devote careful attention to her!

But Miss Labo, even though the living embodiment of malice and revenge, was only incidental to John Remalie. He would not overlook her part, but strangely enough, he did not regard her as the author of the vengeance which had made his life terrible, nor consider how it originated in her vindictive brain. The whole force of his animosity moved toward his son.

The thing was automatic. It required no effort of will to determine that he would obliterate his son, make his son to suffer for the horror of that quarter-century. It was as if this were an organic fact, not to be avoided. It was so.

Remalie's secret was no longer a secret, confined to the breasts of two persons and safely sealed by murder. Four living beings knew the facts. The secret must become a secret again, and Remalie's first concern was to that end.

He considered how he should conduct himself. First he would make sure that Dorcas never disclosed what had taken place in that room. He could frighten her into silence. As to Miss Labo—he felt assured of her silence because he perceived some plot against him which demanded silence. He read her clearly. She planned that her son and his son should possess themselves of John Remalie's cash and mills and timber.

Very well. While they were tunneling under his feet, he would drive a counter-mine, and while he was driving it, no individual should be aware of any change in him. John Remalie would be more John Remalie, even, than himself. Outwardly there would be no change in his life and his habits—except for the one necessary act: the destruction of that black-lettered motto!

Few lives have been revolutionized in the space of minutes as John Remalie's life was revolutionized that night. It was not for the better; perhaps it was not for the worse. He had made an exchange, and on the pages of the Book of Life, the barter was recorded as an even one—*terror for hatred*.

Few of John Remalie's acts, even the most minute, were without a reason. He arose now, opened the door and peered into the dining-room. It was dark, but a light shone from the kitchen. Miss Labo was there. He walked quietly to the door and to the kitchen sink, where he took a drink of water from the dipper. He did not speak to Miss Labo, nor look at her; but he was there to show himself to her, to let it be seen that nothing had happened, and that his attitude toward her was what it had been an hour before. This satisfied him. He convinced himself he had done something important, and he was pleased with himself.

He ascended the stairs and rapped upon Dorcas' door. There was no answer.

"Dorcas, come to the door," he said.

"I'm in bed."

"Come to the door."

He heard a stirring, and then her bare feet on the carpet. "What is it?" she asked coldly from the other side of the panel.

"Open the door."

"Whatever you have to say," she replied, "say it through the door."

It was open defiance. John Remalie did not know what to do about it. It enraged him, while it bewildered him. His experience with women was not extensive. He decided upon surrender.

"I have decided," he said, lowering his voice, "to take no notice of what you told me tonight. As if you had never told me! Do you understand?"

"I understand what you say."

"I forbid you to tell Miss Labo or Jevons that I know."

"I'm not likely to tell them."

"Do you promise?"

"No."

Remalie's voice trembled with rage. "You will take an oath on the Bible—" he began, but he heard her moving away from the door. . . .

He awoke in the morning to a strange curiosity, a compelling

desire to see Jevons with his own eyes. Something within him demanded it. He could think of nothing else; all other concerns must be laid aside until this curiosity was satisfied.

He did not want to talk to Jevons; he would like to have studied Jevons while the young man lay asleep and unconscious of his presence; failing that, his determination was to station himself where he could observe but remain aloof.

It was early. Jevons, he knew, lived at the hotel, and it was the hour for breakfast; so Remalie walked down the street and accosted Orrin Lakin, where the old man sat on his piazza waiting for the sound of the bell.

"Can I have breakfast, Orrin?" he asked.

"Pervidin' you got a quarter," Orrin said, eying Remalie speculatively. "Miss Labo haint ailin', is she?"

"No," Remalie said shortly.

"Set," said Orrin, "and git into the rush when the bell rings. My guests git up with appetites. Nobody kin make money sellin' victuals in this air. One feller et four fried aigs yistiddy. No extry charge! Hard on me, harder on the hens."

The bell, clanging furiously in the capable hands of Mrs. Lakin, caused an immediate shuffling of feet inside, and a general surging toward the dining-room. Remalie followed leisurely, that he might pick out a table suitable to his purpose. Jevons, he perceived, sat at the large table in the center,

which was a sort of club of regulars, who mixed narrations and practical jokes with their food. Remalie was just in time to observe Jevons sprinkle something surreptitiously upon old man Gambridge's oatmeal, and then take a seat at the opposite side of the table with an air of great propriety.

Remalie's sensations were not pleasant. There was shock. Even though he had come for the purpose of watching Jevons, his first sight of that young man, knowing him to be his son, carried an impact. It was incredible. Almost within touch of his hand sat this man in whose veins flowed John Remalie's blood, whose very being originated in John Remalie's being! The thing was hard to grasp.

Remalie searched furtively for likenesses to himself, fancied he detected them—and resented them with vindictive bitterness. . . . He listened.

Old man Gambridge was deluging his oatmeal with the thick cream which Orrin served to his patrons, and Jevons watched him covertly.

"Awful thing down Boston way, wasn't it?" he said, not looking up from his bowl.

"Haint heard nothin' about it?" said Gambridge.

"Traveling man told me. A dozen folks poisoned at breakfast. Some will pull through."

"Have they ketched the one that done it?" asked Gambridge.

"It was an accident—sort of," said Jevons. "Oatmeal."

"Oatmeal?" Gambridge's spoon paused halfway to his lips.

"As I got it," said Jevons, "the company that makes most of our oatmeal was trying out some new process, and before they knew it, it had poisoned a whole batch of breakfast food. Yes sir! They shipped it out all over the country, and it's too late to get it back. The Boston thing was the first outbreak. The traveling man said nobody noticed anything but a kind of a bitter taste. He said nobody ate but a spoonful, but that was enough. It acts quick. Just a touch of it to the tongue—"



Few lives have been revolutionized in the space of minutes as John Remalie's life was revolutionized that night.

By Clarence Budington Kelland

"Huh," said Gammidge, "I don't take no stock in sich talk. Travelin' men is allus a-lyin' to us folks for some pu'pose." He thrust his spoon into his mouth and paused. He licked his lips and stared.

"Bitter?" he said huskily. "Did you say the taste was bitter?"

"Bitter," said Jevons.

"My Gawd!" said the old man, dis- posing of his mouthful in his napkin.

Jevons leaned forward and fixed him with solemn eyes. "What's the matter?" he asked.

"Bitter—bitterer'n aloes! D'y'e s'pose—"

Jevons leaped to his feet. "Hey, somebody," he said sharply. "The white of an egg—quick. Mix it with hot mustard. . . . Feel sort of numb? Kind of sleepy?"

Gammidge nodded, rolled his eyes.

"Hurry," said Jevons to the startled waitress. "Maybe we can save him. Whites of two eggs and mustard. Nothing else will help. Run!"

Jevons hurried around the table, calling on Mike O'Dowd for assist- ance. "Work his arms like he was drowned," he said excitedly. "Pump 'em up and down! Waggle 'em! That's the way. Keep it going. Here comes the antidote. You keep him awake while I mix it. Don't let him drowse. Shake him—pinch him. That's it!"

Jevons poured yellow mustard into the saucer of white of egg and beat it furiously into a thick mass. He scooped up a huge tablespoonful of the stuff and stood over Gammidge.

"Pry his mouth open. . . . Hold him. . . . There!" He inserted the burning dose into the yawning cavern beneath the bedraggled mustache and uttered a sigh of relief. "Saved!" he said in the tone of the hero of a melodrama. "In the nick of time! Let him be, boys. He'll recover now."

Gammidge strangled, puffed, coughed. He snatched a glass of water and poured it down his smarting throat, gurgling and rolling his eyes and pounding upon the table because his speech failed. The regulars shouted with joy. Gammidge recovered his voice. "Dum ye! Ye young spriggins! I'll git ye. You jest wait!"

"Hm!" said Jevons. "Who was it filled the syrup-pot with vinegar yesterday and let me pour it on my flapjacks? Seems to me you got a lot of fun out of it."

"You set me to another table, Orrin Lakin. You git that girl to move my place. I wont put up with sich doin's. I—"

"Better shet up and take your medicine," said Orrin. "Them that lives by the sword shall die by the sword. . . . Makes a heap of difference whose dawg gits kicked, don't it?"

This was no uncommon scene, no unusual type of incident to John Remalie, whose life had been spent in lumber-camps and amid the harsh and crude humor of men whose jokes were heavy as their hands; but now it angered him, disgusted him. Jevons had perpetrated this thing. Here was this young man in the midst of a business enterprise demanding every atom of his force, yet stooping to buffoonery! So much the better! He arose from the table and stalked out of doors. . . . His son! His son!

CHAPTER XI

IT is a satisfaction to me," purred John Remalie, "that the wholesome life you are living is becoming most attractive to you. The ill effects of a neglected youth are being wiped out by our simple ways. You are finding in our untainted



"Whatever you have to say," she replied, "say it through the door."

air, and in the beauties of God's free forest, pleasures not to be found in that artificial atmosphere which would have destroyed you."

"My youth was not neglected," said Dorcas. "My father—"

"I know. . . . I know. We will not argue the point. I have noted the change in you, Dorcas." He spoke with an oily benig- nity. "You have discovered the undefiled joy of following the course of our trout-brooks. There is nothing artificial there. I have noted how much of your time is spent alone in the woods, or in company with such an excellent person as Miss Piggott."

Dorcas bit her lip, but did not speak. Miss Labo peered at Remalie with unwavering eyes, for she knew the habits of mind of the man, and waited for what was to follow.

"You are all I have to live for," said Remalie with practised pathos. He paused for dramatic effect. "I have made my will," he said, and as he said it, he watched Miss Labo's face out of the corner of his eye. "I have judged the improvement in your character so promising that I have considered you worthy of a great trust. Yes, my dear. I have weighed you, and found you not wanting." His surreptitious scrutiny of Miss Labo's face filled him with satisfaction, and he went on: "Therefore," he said, "I have made you my sole heir. Everything I have shall be yours. Everything! Mills, timber, securities! They shall

all be yours, my dear. Nobody shall touch them but yourself. Remember that. No matter what happens, nobody but you shall ever lay a finger to so much as a sliver of my property. *Nobody!* Nobody can take it away from you. You will not even be able to give it away. I have safeguarded you even from yourself."

"I don't want your money," said Dorcas.

"It is a great deal," said Remalie, paying no attention to her interjection, but reveling in the sort of pleasure that can come to a certain kind of man from witnessing the impotent rage of a victim he delights to goad. "The amount is increasing every day and, I assure you, you will be a wealthy woman, Dorcas."

This was the opening skirmish in the war he had declared upon his housekeeper. He had read her aright. He had seen into her purpose, which was to secure by some means his fortune for her son. Her whole soul was devoted to that project. Now, daily, many times a day, he would taunt her with the futility of her desire.

"I have inserted one provision in the will, Dorcas," he went on. "You may think it a trifle strange and altogether unnecessary. But I have excellent reasons, my dear—excellent reasons. Some day I may tell them to you. This provision need not give you the least alarm. No indeed! It is merely this: that in case you marry a man who has in his veins one drop of Remalie blood, my entire fortune goes to certain worthy charities duly enumerated."

"I shall marry or not marry as I want to," said Dorcas. "Your money won't make a bit of difference."

"I am your guardian," said Remalie sternly. "You owe me obedience and respect."

Dorcas did not reply.

Miss Labo sat now with eyes upon her plate. Her face had assumed its habitual parchment-like look, but her eyes were glowing balefully. She saw herself baffled and her plan for her son's enrichment destroyed. It enraged her. But the scheme she had cherished these thirty years, cherished until it had become the sole object of her life, was not one she could abandon now if she would. It compelled her to go on.

Long ago she had seen Dorcas as John Remalie's heiress, and then the thing had seemed simple. She would marry Dorcas to her son, Remalie, with a certain uncanny insight into sinister motives, had perceived it and counteracted it. She would now find some other way. As she saw the matter, there was no other way, so long as Dorcas Remalie remained her uncle's heir. If Dorcas ceased to be, if John Remalie found himself without an heir, then he might welcome news of a living son. Better, thought Miss Labo, to leave those millions even to a son not acknowledged, than to leave it nowhere. It was the germ of an idea which would grow and eat its way into her brain until it took complete possession of her being.

As Miss Labo saw the situation, Dorcas stood now between her son and the fortune which was his by right. Therefore—

John Remalie, toying with his victim for his own good pleasure, had set in motion a force simple, elemental, filled with potentialities. Not only that; he had loosed a suggestion, and psychologists tell us suggestions are ill things to turn at large unwatched.

Dorcas arose from the breakfast-table with obvious haste, and presently left the house, rod in hand and creel over her shoulder, to meet Orrin Lakin, who had promised to drive her to a trout-stream, the hunger and number of whose inhabitants he had described eloquently if inaccurately.

Orrin had returned to the hotel from the early train and was waiting.

"Never knowed it to happen before, not in forty year. Dum

nigh two minutes ahead of time, by gorry! If I hadn't 'a' licked up my hosses, it'd 'a' got in before I got there. Somethin' comin' over this here country, what with trains comin' in ahead of time and all. I wouldn't 'a' let that train git there fust for all the money in the State, and the governorship throwed in. Haint missed one fer forty year. Now if they're goin' to take to runnin' ahead of schedule, it looks like I'd have to hitch right there to the platform and stay stiddy. Huh! Everybody's hurryin' and rushin' and tearin' their clothes. World's goin' to pot. They'll have *me* hustlin' next. Fetch your lunch?"

"Yes."

"I can't come fer you till nigh four o'clock."



He sniffed the icing of her cake suspiciously, then with enthusiasm. "You see," said Jevon,

"That will do nicely," she replied, well pleased with the prospect.

The old man drove along in silence for a time, evidently pondering some weighty question. He cleared his throat once or twice as if about to speak, but relapsed again into thought as if the matter were not yet clear enough in his mind to warrant putting it into words.

"Um! A-hum! Been' a-studyin' you some—kind of scrutinizin' you, like you might say. Haint jest satisfied nor content."

"Why, Uncle Orrin, what have I done now?"

"Taint what you've done. What's curryin' me down is what you haint done. How old be you?"

"Twenty."

"Taint right nor fit. Taint natural. No, by gum. You ought to be havin' fun and scramblin' around with youngsters. Instid of which you shine up to an old coot like me. Me an' Letty Piggott's the only two friends you got."

"You're plenty, Uncle Orrin."

"No sich thing! Twenty ought to mess around with twenty. You ought to be havin' fellers. You're slick-lookin' enough to have a houseful. They ought to be a-standin' in line waitin' their turn, and a-fightin' each other all over the county. Up here, girls mostly git married around your age—or sooner."

Dorcas laughed. "Suggest somebody, Uncle, and I'll see if I can't get him."

By Clarence Budington Kelland

"Um! You're offish. The boys is scairt of you. Then ag'in, the' haint many here I'd go out and recommend fer your husband. Haint you got no beau back where you come from?"

"No."

"Never had none?"

"Not a real one."

"Huh. Whatever did you do with your Sunday evenin's? Go moonin' off into the woods alone, or what?"

"You mustn't interfere with my going into the woods, Uncle Orrin. The woods make me contented. When I'm there, all alone, I have a feeling I'm where I belong. The woods are good for me."



"how the luxuries of an effete civilization undermine the sturdiest backwoods character."

"They'd be better if there was a young feller along to grab hold of your hand once in a while and cut up capers like young fellers do when they're courtin'. Girls was made to be courted, and married. Ever give any thought to this here Jevons? He's smart-lookin', and he's up and doin', and I calc'late he's got some money. Eddicated, too! Sich an idee ever enter your head?"

"No," said Dorcas, so shortly that Orrin turned to eye her inquiringly.

"Don't like him, eh?"

"No."

"Um! Got reasons?"

"Yes."

"Don't b'lieve they're good ones," he said with an air of one pronouncing final judgment. "I know that young feller, and I like him. Yes sir! There's nothin' wrong with him, unless you might say he was a mite light-minded sometimes. Kind of sassy-like. But he don't mean no harm. If I was you, I'd kind of take a fresh start and see if he haint better'n you think he is."

"I know he isn't."

"Well, if you're sot, you're sot. No use tryin' to turn a woman's mind with a monkey-wrench. Haint nothin' to git a grip on. Here's where you git out. Foller this ol' road about a mile, and you come to the brook. Don't wander off of it, and

hang to it till you come to a traveled road. That's where I calc'late on pickin' you up this afternoon. Out you git. Um! Wisht I was forty-odd year younger'n I be. I'll bet you wouldn't go moggin' off alone—"

Dorcas followed the grass-grown old "tote-road" as it swayed through the woods, careless of levels, having no regard for boulders, doing always its best to see to it that no conveyance could pass over it with comfort or even moderate assurance against upsetting. Dorcas thought it the most willful and mischievous road she had ever followed, and wondered how any horse-drawn vehicle invented by man could travel a mile of it without resolving into fragments. The road seemed to have an impish humor.

When a stump protruded far enough to catch the left hub, a deep chuck-hole would be provided for the right wheel, and just beyond, the way would dip and sway from side to side as if it were rolling with laughter at the joke.

Somehow the road made her think of Jevons. It was such a care-free and natural road, apparently taking no thought as to the course it followed, but nevertheless arriving jauntily at its destination. No other road would have seemed natural there; it had caught the very spirit of the forest, if anything constructed by man can catch the forest spirit, and seemed to be rather a natural phenomenon than an artificial way swamped out by woodsmen's axes. Dorcas was irritated with it because it made her think of Jevons, and she was resentful toward Orrin Lakin for forcing Jevons upon her as a companion when she wished to be alone.

Orrin might have known, she thought resentfully, that she did not want a young man intruding in her thoughts, especially on such a day and in such surroundings. But how could a girl do otherwise than think of a person when somebody tactlessly urged him upon her as a husband? No matter how much one hates a young man, if he is suggested in the capacity of life's partner, one has to consider it and imagine, if one can, what the result would be and how it would work out.

Dorcas trudged along, rudely trying to shoulder Jevons off the road, but he would not go. He shouldered back, and held his place manfully. Hitherto Jevons had been to her a species of animate object, interesting in its way, capable of evil actions or of virtuous

actions, but not a definite human being with whom one might assume intimate relations of friendship or ties more binding. He had been an impersonal entity. Now he became vivid, living, very personal—to be regarded with keen interest and apprehension, not to be gazed upon in aloof manner as upon some specimen in Nature's museum. Dorcas resented his impertinence in venturing so to alter his status.

At last she reached the stream, a boisterous, hustling, gurgling busybody of a watercourse! It was the sort of stream one might leap across if one were not in skirts. One saw little of it at a time, for it was fond of sharp curves and was forever dodging around a bend just when it became most interesting. It was a very downhill brook, and on the friendliest terms with the forest it threaded, for trees grew at its very brink, and sometimes shrubbery ventured to lift itself from among the stones in the brook's very middle. Like the road Dorcas had just traveled, it had a Puck-like humor, and played pranks. It sought to undermine the banks beneath the roots of unsuspecting alders, and to wash away the earth so that long, slender root-tendrils found nothing to cling to and trailed helplessly in the water. Perhaps this was not altogether in mischievous spirit, but to provide ideal lurking-places for speckled trout, where in the cool darkness they might rest and enjoy the delight of being trout and wait for flies to drop on the sunlit surface. It (Continued on page 130)

POOR DEAR PAPA

By
MEREDITH
NICHOLSON

Illustrated by
NANCY FAY



"You shouldn't mix your business with your social life," Mrs. Busby admonished.
"It's undignified and unbecoming."

"I've taken the Corning house—rented it for a year," remarked Mr. Busby without looking up from the afternoon paper he was reading.

Coming in from a tea at the house of the president of the near-by college, Mrs. Busby had found her husband established in his accustomed chair on the veranda. He usually didn't reach home until after six, and as it was only half-past five she thought he might be ill. His immunity from illnesses was one of Mark Busby's irritating peculiarities. He was not ill now; Mrs. Busby satisfied herself that he had never looked better.

"Mark!" she exclaimed in the tremulous tone of one who has heard something too good to be true. "I thought you said you'd never leave Rivington."

"Said it frequently—changed my mind!"

"It's perfectly wonderful! You've no idea what it will mean to the children, to all of us! I've told you for the last ten years that we've outgrown Rivington. It's stifling, narrow and bigoted. And no suburb is quite the same as the city. The children have felt the discrimination, and right now is the most important time for them."

"Snobbery's based largely on geography," muttered Mr. Busby, refolding the newspaper without looking up.

"What did you say, Mark?"

"Nothing, nothing of importance. I was just thinking how large a part geography plays in the life of the world. It's quite astonishing, when you come to think of it."

Mr. Busby did not often venture into the realm of philosophy; and his wife—who held interesting if not important opinions

on many subjects, and delivered addresses fluently and with ease before all manner of leagues and federations—was surprised at her spouse's departure from his usual terse statements, that were as lacking in literary graces as a cipher telegram. Her friends frequently remarked that Mrs. Busby should have married a politician, for she would have been

of great assistance to a man of spirit and ambition, and with any kind of material to work on would have attained the White House. Mark Busby was far from being presidential timber. It was an enormous irony that one so shrinking, so depressed by the mere threat of any form of social entertainment, should possess or be possessed by a wife who found stimulus and delight in all manner of groupings and combinations of the human kind.

"Why are the Cornings giving up their home?" Mrs. Busby inquired. She was vastly excited by her husband's announcement, but afraid to let him know the degree of her delight and satisfaction. If he had told her he had purchased a white elephant on which to disport himself in the quiet village on Sunday afternoons, she would not have been more surprised than by his unexpected announcement that they were to transfer themselves to the Corning property.

"Couldn't afford it, I guess," he answered dryly. "Excuse is, now that Mary's married, they don't need so much room; moving into the Shepard Apartments."

"I thought they had no end of money. You can hardly realize, Mark, what prestige this will give us; and the girls just coming on and all. They have no chance here in Rivington. And some of the girls at Miss Trimble's school they knew best live right around the Cornings. Everybody that is anybody lives up there beyond the creek. It will be like stepping into a new world. They must want a big rental for the place," she added, leadingly.

"Yep," remarked Busby calmly. "I'm paying five thousand dollars cash for twelve months' use of the house as it stands—furniture, garage, three automobiles, everything."

He ended with a sweeping gesture of his right hand. It seemed incongruous, the gesture. He was little given to gesturing. A small, lean man, he was abstemious of physical exertion of every kind, except that he walked whenever it was possible, his method of locomotion being an absurd jerky impulsion of the body.

"And I hope, Mark, that you have taken an option to buy if we like it?" she asked timidly.

Usually she didn't address him timidly.

"Nope, nothing like that," he replied, without abating his mystifying composure.

"You will sell this house, of course?" she inquired, resolved now that the goal of her ambition was in sight the place that had known her should know her no more.

"Already sold it," he answered, and tossed aside the newspaper and yawned quite openly. Usually his yawns enraged her; they were a part of his ritual of rejection and denial. That he had, without consulting her, sold the big, comfortable house with its half-acre of lawn and the maples and elms he had himself planted, and the garden in which he enjoyed puttering, passed all belief.

"We've been very happy here," she remarked wistfully. "Much as I feel that our duty to the children demands a change, it will be a wrench to give up the place."

"Too late for the wrench now. You've been wanting to go for the last ten years, and you can begin to pack as soon as you like. The Cornings are moving now."

"How much did you get for the house, Mark?"

"Thirty thousand, cash."

The reply was given indifferently, carelessly, as though thirty thousand dollars was a negligible sum, and her wonder grew.

"Of course, you can invest it to advantage," she ventured. It flashed through her mind that perhaps the interest on thirty thousand dollars would pay the rent of the Corning house, but a quick calculation disproved this. She was disturbed. Perhaps his mind was shattered; brooding, silent people did sometimes lose their minds; but he was more tranquil, more assured than she remembered to have seen him in years.

"Not going to invest it," came the astounding answer. "Sold everything I had—not much, but we're going to spend it—blow it all in!"

"Why, Mark, do you think it wise?" exclaimed Mrs. Busby aghast.

"Going to find out whether it's wise or not," he replied placidly. Something like an amused smile played about his thin lips, but it was too elusive and fleeting for analysis. "For years you've wanted to move, to bring the children in touch with the society swells in town. It's been your idea to marry the girls off where it will count for something. I suppose it will be better for Wendell too."

"It will open a new world to all the children," declared Mrs. Busby, "but more particularly I am interested in the effect of the change in Olivia. Olivia will be obliged to give up the absurd idea of devoting herself to business. It would be wholly inconsistent with our new life for her to keep on in your office. I hope you will be firm with her, Mark. I've never been able to mold her as I've molded the other girls, but now I shall count on your support. It would never do for her to continue as a clerk in your office when we're moving up there among people who wouldn't understand it—"

"I haven't got any office; I've sold the business," he interposed.

"You've sold out! You're retiring!"

"Certainly; tired—going to loaf awhile, join the rest of you in a life of leisure."

He did not say it wearily, but rather with a mild jubilation. The news that he had retired from business was even more astounding than the announcement that they were to turn their backs upon Rivington. Mrs. Busby hungered for details. He had conducted, since before their marriage, a real estate and insurance agency on the second floor of an old business block. It had expanded from time to time, but to the outward eye it was far from flourishing. Before trust companies began absorbing such functions, Busby had frequently been appointed administrator of decedents' estates; and he was recognized as a man of probity who could be trusted to administer the affairs of widows and orphans for the best interest of the beneficiaries. In addition to these fiduciary employments, he lent

money on mortgages for a number of nonresident clients and had never lost a cent of their money. His judgment on real-estate values was sought by men of his own generation who wanted conservative opinions. The younger element scoffed at him, holding that he was a back number, a dead one, who had watched the growth of the city from seventy-five to three hundred thousand without being infected with the spirit of progress. At forty, age had already set its seal upon him; and at fifty his habitual harassed, dispirited air caused him to be referred to generally as Old Mark Busby.

MRS. BUSBY shared a prevailing idea that he was very rich but that he had mastered the fine art of concealing his wealth in non-taxables. From the time the education of the children brought the first tilt between Mark and his wife Heloise,—he wanted them to attend the public schools, and she set her face sternly against this,—he had fought the mounting family expenditures. The daughters of the horse-leech were not more insatiable in their cry of "Give, Give!" than Mrs. Busby, Constance, Portia and Wendell.

Olivia was different. "She's her father's child," Mrs. Busby would remark with a despairing sigh; but there was no manner of resemblance between Olivia and her father except that she inherited his passion for industry, and like him, hated rows.

A born democrat, Olivia deliberately chose the manner and means of education paid for out of the public funds, graduating from the Manual Training School with special honors.

With her own hands she could produce an edible pie or a smart

gown, and in the matter of remodeling a hat was almost uncannily expert. Her genius in such particulars made hard sledding for Mrs. Busby and the other girls when it came to monthly bills. It was manifestly unfair that a girl blessed with a busy, ambitious mother and two leisure-loving sisters should be endowed with talents so calculated to invite invidious comparisons in the paternal mind. Olivia was a touchy subject in all the Busby parental conferences.

In his quite undemonstrative way Mark worshiped Olivia. Her imperfections, disclosed and pointed out from time to time, her differentiation from the rest of the children, only strengthened his adoration. Olivia whistled, hummed, sang, faced the world joyfully. Old people in Rivington hung about their gates at times when Olivia might be expected to pass; her smile was a tonic, an inspiration to the weary and oppressed.

"I hope," ventured Mrs. Busby, a trifle tremulously, "that you've done what I've wanted you to do for years, incorporated your business; I've always hoped to see you the president of the Busby Trust Company. If you'd done this five years ago when I urged you to do it, and the Fielding Company wanted to take you in, you'd have shared all their prosperity. I hope, Mark, you haven't thrown the business away. Sometimes I think you've let more good chances go by than any other man in the world."

He had heard this stimulating remark frequently through many years, but he did not sigh now as he usually had.

"Didn't give it away—traded it to Olivia for the farm her Aunt Sarah gave her. Always wanted a farm. Passed

In the matter of remodeling a hat Olivia was almost uncannily expert.



the papers yesterday—Olivia's twenty-first birthday; all strictly legal."

"Mark!" gasped Mrs. Busby.

That Aunt Sarah had seen fit to devise and bequeath to Olivia a two-hundred-acre farm, ignoring the rest of the children and giving the balance of her property to an orphan asylum, had been a serious blow to Mrs. Busby. To be sure, it was Mrs. Busby's own aunt who had done this grievous thing. But to treat her with respect and occasionally make over one of her superannuated gowns, as Olivia had done, when no regular dress-maker would bother with it—this manifestly did not justify the bequest of two hundred acres of valuable land that grew wheat and corn of tangible value, and lay along the river where some new spurt of the city was bound to increase its value enormously.

"Then," demanded Mrs. Busby faintly, "you mean Olivia is going to carry on the business! Now, Mark, you know I never like to complain, but you really should not have done this without consulting me! It will be a reflection on you and all of us if she hangs back when we're taking this important step."

"She didn't have to make the trade. I was going to sell, anyhow. I always thought I'd like to have a farm. My books will show that she didn't get the best of the deal. Put one over on Olivia, I guess."

The thought of putting something over on Olivia caused him to smile again, his odd, inscrutable smile.

PORTIA, Constance and Wendell arrived from a suburban tennis tournament and heard the glad tidings that they were to move. They expressed their delight guardedly, but the glance that passed between them was charged with satisfaction that at last their father had overcome his miserliness. They saw freedom ahead. It was in their minds that if their silent father, who had been a check on their ambitions for years, felt able to rent a house like the Corning establishment, he must be not merely well to do, as they had believed, but rich indeed.

"It's not far from the Corning house to the Woodstock Club, and being so handy, we can use the Club a lot," remarked Constance, whose expertness at tennis brought her frequently into the newspapers. "I've always wanted to belong to Woodstock."

"You're going to," remarked Busby calmly.

"Oh, Father!" they chorused jubilantly.

It occurred to Mrs. Busby that her husband's rebirth into an existence so marked by generosity called for a display of magnanimity on the part of his family; so she said impressively:

"Of course, now that we're going out where the Woodstock is so accessible, we won't need to go away at all this summer."

Busby nodded his appreciation of this concession. The question of where his wife and children should go for the heated term had been a matter of fierce contention every spring.

"I hope," exclaimed Mrs. Busby, "that you children appreciate what your dear papa is doing for you. If we'd searched the town, we couldn't have picked a place better suited to our needs than the Corning house. We shall have the Bartons on the south and the Erskines on the north. They are rather new, but they've been taken up by the nicest people."

"I met Billy Erskine at the Ripleys' party; Billy's ever so nice, and a wonderful dancer," remarked Portia dreamily.

"Billy's all right," Wendell affirmed. "His father's got a big wad, all right. And the Bartons have scads of money. It's going to keep us humping to make the grade with that bunch."

Mrs. Busby frowned at her son. Nothing could have been more unfortunate than his intimation that heavy appropriations would be necessary to sustain the Busbys on the high level of their prospective neighbors. And Wendell was hardly in a position to speak in large terms of family expenditures. Dropped from college in his sophomore year, his attempt to make himself useful in his father's office had been a gloomy failure. He had held a job as demonstrator for an automobile agent until he smashed a car belonging to his employer—a deplorable circumstance, as the calamity befell him while he was on his way to a ball-game with a young lady employed as cashier in a motion-picture theater, who could not possibly have been viewed in the light of a potential purchaser. Wendell's mother had believed him to be endowed with musical genius and he had been the victim of considerably expensive instruction on the violin, but his soul expressed itself much more felicitously through the medium of the banjo and trap-drum. Reduced to the simplest symbols, Wendell's worthlessness might be set down as A-1-plus.

Busby did not flinch at his son's remark, which ordinarily would have evoked from him a depressing warning against waste and extravagance.

"Soon as we get moved, I'm going to take up golf," Busby's tone was almost jaunty. "Conny, I guess you and Wendell can give me a start."

Mrs. Busby seized the moment to disclose the great secret that their father had retired from business.

"Poor dear Papa! he's worked so hard for you children all these years, but he's wise enough to stop now and enjoy the fruits of his labor."

"Fifty thousand dollars," said Busby, lifting his feet to the veranda rail. "That's what we're going to spend the coming year, not a cent more."

Mrs. Busby's heart bounded. Eighteen thousand had been last year's budget, and this minimum had been attained only after furious battles. It was now as plain as daylight that her husband had been preaching frugality for years, merely to conceal his affluence. Fifty thousand dollars would carry them far; and if he could provide so stupendous a sum for one year, an even larger amount might be forthcoming later on.

"You've all been naggin' me for money and more money," Busby continued, "and when I've talked economy, you've thought me hard and niggardly. It's all I've got—proceeds of sale of this house and some other odds and ends. I want you to sail as high as you can go on fifty thousand. I only caution you to make it last the year out. We don't want to be stranded in that fine house with nothing to eat and the sheriff sitting on the doorstep. It wouldn't look well."

The children laughed immoderately. Mrs. Busby smiled in a superior way as though this were only a whim on their father's part.

"Expect all you children to marry into the nobility," he said, almost gayly. "You're going up there where money comes and goes easy. Your ma has high ambitions for you. I don't want you to disappoint her."

Olivia came running up the steps and interrupted the discussion.

"Isn't it wonderful that we're going to move!" cried Constance.

"But of course, Papa told you."

"Think it's fine," Olivia assented, seating herself on the rail.

She was aware of a guarded, hostile look from her mother.

"We must all show ourselves worthy of this great opportunity," said Mrs. Busby, a remark of which Olivia knew herself to be the target.

"We ought to be ashamed of ourselves if we don't," Olivia agreed. Supper was announced.

BUSBY yielded himself to the comforts and joys of the new home with the nearest approach to enthusiasm his children had ever seen him manifest. He set himself with dogged determination to master golf, and clad in the knickerbockers Wendell had counseled him to purchase, was on the Woodstock links every morning. The transition of the family from Rivington to the new fashionable quarter of the city made something of a splash. The society columns gazetted it, and people talked about it in a manner that afforded Mrs. Busby the keenest satisfaction. Gossip attributed to Busby a large fortune, heretofore concealed in the academic shades of Rivington. His banker, passing him on the golf-links, was puzzled that a customer whose transactions had never attained importance should suddenly drop his business and give wide advertisement to an undreamed of prosperity.

"Billy Erskine seems greatly taken with Portia," Mrs. Busby remarked to her husband when they had been established in the Corning house for a month. "And Wendell and Dorothy Erskine are together most of the time. The Erskines seem very nice."

"Yep; no objections to the Erskines," Busby agreed.

"Mr. Erskine is very unassuming, considering his wealth."

"Yep; doesn't put on any airs with me."

"And of course, if Portia and Wendell both . . ."

"Both marry into the Erskine family, you'd be tickled to death. Don't think I'm going to object; it's all right with me."

"You've met young Tom Gaylord, I think, Mark. He's coming to the house a good deal, and of course it's Constance that he's interested in. I don't know that he's wholly desirable, but of course, the family is one of the oldest in the city."

"Makes a heap o' difference," Busby mumbled. "Bob Gaylord, that boy's father, has lived on his grandfather's reputation for the last thirty years."

"I suppose they're really not rich, as such things go—"

"Hardly say so. Bob sold off most of the property he inherited—lived it up; boy seems nice chap; nothing against the boy except he's a loafer; never did a day's work in his life."

"He's the State tennis champion, you know; that makes a strong tie between him and Constance."

By Meredith Nicholson



"There's Jimmy Raymond," Olivia said. "I'd be ashamed not to ask Jimmy when we're giving such a big party."

"If the boy's a tennis champion, he shows a lot more energy than his father ever did."

"It's been a dream of mine for years," Mrs. Busby went on speciously, "that one of our children should marry into one of the pioneer families. It's remarkable how much stress is laid on ancestry in the West these days. It's too bad our forebears didn't settle in Indiana earlier."

"Fooled away a couple of generations in Ohio. Big mistake, but we can't do anything about it now."

"I have a sentiment about such things, Mark. If Constance and Tom . . ."

"No objection to the sentiment, no objection to the boy."

"If one of the girls should choose a poor man for a husband where there are compensations. . . ."

"Let 'em live on the compensations," Busby replied musingly.

"I suppose Olivia's bound to marry to suit herself. I'm not troubling myself about her."

"I wouldn't—strong nature; if Olivia ever starts to make a fool marriage, there won't be any heading her off."

Busby was a changed man, and in nothing was the change so marked as in his refusal to trouble his head with matters of domestic finance. Every month, without the slightest ado, he deposited to the credit of his wife Heloise the sum of four thousand one hundred and sixty-six dollars and sixty-six cents. The ease with which this sum was forthcoming caused Mrs. Busby, Portia, Constance and Wendell to raise their estimate of the family wealth. They decided that it was likely that their father had amassed a fortune of at least two millions.

The children's allowances were apportioned by Mrs. Busby, not without fierce contests, which were kept carefully from the paternal ear. The mother stoutly refused to heed the demand of Portia, Constance and Wendell that Olivia, having an income of her own, should receive less from the family purse than her

brother and sisters. To discriminate against Olivia would be sure to arouse their father's ire, she pointed out. Olivia and her father were too close, too deeply in each other's confidence, for the rest of the household to risk his displeasure. So Olivia received her mother's monthly check for one hundred and fifty dollars, the amount granted to the other girls and Wendell.

Anyone might have thought that Mark Busby hated money, from his manifestations of annoyance whenever the word or any of its synonyms were used in his presence.

"Mark, dear, I don't like to bother you about these trifles when you're enjoying your rest, but about our contributions to charities and things like that . . ."

"Do as you please about 'em. You're the boss. Anything you give away comes out of your fifty thousand; remember that."

"Certainly, Mark, I only thought that I'd like you to know what we're giving to good causes. Mrs. Redding came to see me yesterday about the endowment for the Colored Orphans' Refuge. They want to start their campaign with fifty one-thousand-dollar subscriptions. You know the position the Reddings hold here, and I thought it quite nice of her to give us the opportunity to show our interest in the city's philanthropies. Of course, I'll make the subscription in your name."

"No, you don't! Giving your own money—put down your own name. You don't need to ask me what to give away."

DEEPLY tanned by his daily round of golf, Busby, to all appearances, was enjoying himself hugely. After a few weeks of devotion, Portia, Constance and Wendell became too busy to trouble themselves about him; and Mrs. Busby, deeply engaged with the management of the big house and the firm planting of her social foundations, had no time for him. Nevertheless, he found himself the object of considerable flattering attention. People who had known him for years modified their

opinion of him. Those who had seen in him only a shabby, uninteresting figure now found him delightfully quaint. People he had never known before sought him on the veranda of the Woodstock to solicit his advice about their investments. He made himself agreeable to all his new acquaintances, and among these was his neighbor Erskine.

Erskine had moved to the city from an up-State town where he had successfully operated a canning factory. Erskine, like Busby, was a tyro at golf, and it was at his suggestion that they played frequently together.

"How do you like loafing?" Erskine asked one day. "You and I have worked hard all our lives."

"Enjoying it—got to a place where I thought I'd rest a little," Busby answered.

"Well, sir, that's just my case. My family teased me into getting away from Fairport so they could see how things are done in large cities, and I thought I'd humor 'em."

"Got to please our families. That's what we're here for."

"You know the run of things here in the city. What do you think of Sedgwick Motor bonds?"

"Don't think anything about 'em at all; never had any money in industrials."

"You don't say!" Erskine exclaimed. "Somebody told me you held a big block of bonds."

"Guess you can hear I own most anything," Busby remarked absently, concentrating on the negotiation of a difficult putt.

"Just between ourselves," said Erskine, "I'm a little bit short of ready cash right now. I know you used to have money to lend. I put a mortgage on my house when I bought it, and I've got a payment coming due next week that's going to crowd me a little. I can put up some life-insurance policies as collateral."

"Haven't any money to lend. Out of business," Busby answered, in a manner that closed the discussion.

When Barton, his other neighbor, called to give him a chance to invest in the stock of an oil company he was organizing, more for the value of his name than anything else, he said, Busby was so amused that he was obliged to take a long walk that he might indulge in quiet laughter.

In the excitement of their new existence, the other Busby children gave little heed to Olivia. She had chosen for herself a room on the third floor of the new home, and came and went from the office with the regularity of the old Rivington days.

With a despairing sigh, Mrs. Busby spoke of Olivia to their new acquaintances as a child who simply would have her own way. It was ridiculous, of course, that she should insist on a business career, but no doubt she would soon get tired of it. Busby made a point of keeping away from his former office, which, within three months after he had turned it over to Olivia, was so completely transformed that it was hardly recognized by old patrons. Writing fire insurance did not interest Olivia particularly, and leaving this to her assistants, she was developing the real-estate end of the business and had added to the sign on the windows:

INVESTMENT SECURITIES.
"I hope you understand, Olivia," her mother said in the privacy of Olivia's room, "that I have no wish to influence you or your sisters in your choice of husbands."

"Yes, Mamma," replied Olivia, who understood nothing of the kind.

"But it has seemed to me that with your strong practical side, you would be better appreciated by some man older than yourself, some one who would find in you a sympathetic and helpful counselor."

"Is that why you're inviting Mr. Billingsly to the house so much?" laughed Olivia. "I serve notice right now that I'm against all widowers."

"He's deeply inter-

ested in you, and realizes your worth as no younger man could, and he's of an old family—a founder of the Pioneer Club; and not against him that he's one of the richest men in the city."

"Nothing doing!" said Olivia cheerfully. "I'm much obliged to you though, Mamma, for giving me a chance to get acquainted with him. We've just made a sale for him of our office that brought in a five-hundred-dollar commission."

"You shouldn't mix your business with your social life," Busby admonished. "It's undignified and unbecoming."

"I don't see why it isn't perfectly proper," said Olivia naturally, "if you can pick up a little money between calls to speak. It adds a lot to the joy of a party."

Olivia was not without attentions from young men. Slender, dark, with the blackest of hair brushed straight from her forehead, her charm lay in her alertness, the impression she gave of being thoroughly alive. Her smile was a social business asset; it was one of those smiles that gains an immense value from its way of flashing at you unexpectedly. It was noticeable that she spoke to more people at a large function than any other girl. In her own fashion Olivia was getting as much of the change as her sisters and Wendell, though with a difference. Meeting the mayor on the broad veranda of the Woodstock, wheedled him into promising the immediate repair of the streets where property she managed for absentee owners was cult to rent.

"When a girl smiles at you like that, you've got to do something," said the mayor to his street commissioner, and the necessary repairs were made.

So many more people were staying in town than usual. Mrs. Busby decided to give a party. To provide the setting for this function, she announced that it would be given at the Woodstock. It was in preparing the invitation list that she encountered the first serious obstacle in the readjustment of her family in their new state of affluence.

"This will be an event of great importance to all of us," she declared impressively, "and we want to be very careful not to include any undesirables. It would be my idea not to ask any of the old Rivington circle, even our dearest friends there, for they can entertain them in some other way."

"Right!" ejaculated Busby. "Wait and ask 'em to a funeral!" Wendell nearly choked to death over this manifestation of his father's wit.

"I shall expect you all to coöperate with me," Mrs. Busby continued, "to the end that this may be a brilliant affair; and, of course, a party at this season will attract more attention than would in the middle of the winter, when there is so much going on."

In spite of her mother's warning Olivia submitted a list of names which was immediately challenged.



Busby was so amused that he was obliged to take a long walk that he might indulge in quiet laughter.

"I thought you understood, dear, that we're not going to try to mix social elements. Some of the people you suggest I don't know at all. Our purpose in moving up here was to know the nice people. You don't seem to grasp the idea."

"Some of those people are customers of mine and perfectly respectable people," said Olivia. "And there's Jimmy Raymond. I'd be ashamed not to ask Jimmy when we're giving such a big party; he'd feel I had deliberately left him out. Jimmy's poor, of course, but he's very nice and awfully amusing."

"The poor idiot works, doesn't he?" demanded Busby. "You want to be careful about inviting anybody that works. It isn't respectable to work."

"You will remember, Mark, that I predicted just this sort of thing when you insisted on letting Olivia go to the Manual Training High School."

"Oh, I didn't see so much of Jimmy there, because he finished the year I entered," Olivia protested.

"Boilermaker, or something like that, isn't he?" asked Wendell.

"No doubt he has made boilers," Olivia replied, "and you may be sure they were good ones; but he's a real genius. I think we're going to hear from Jimmy." (Continued on page 121)



"Were you looking for a Spirit, sir?" he inquired. "She's in here."

SATAN AND THE SPIRIT

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Illustrated by RAE BURN VAN BUREN

THERE was not the slightest manner of doubt that Mr. Joseph P. Cray was thoroughly enjoying himself. He sat on the ledge of his box at Covent Garden, his legs dangling in midair, a paper cap with streamers upon his head, and the full joy of living in his blood. At times he played weird ditties upon a tin whistle. At others he threw with unusual skill streamers of gayly colored paper halfway across the floor. His cheery, good-natured face was aglow with happiness. He exchanged greetings right and left with perfect strangers. He was at once a notable and a popular figure.

"Yankee Doodle bought a poodle," shouted the Shah of Persia as he passed with the Queen of Sheba.

"Har, har, har! Var, var, var! Rah, rah, rah!" yelled Mr. Cray.

A little peal of soft laughter close to his ear startled him so that he nearly lost his balance. A filmy gray figure, masked, was leaning by his side. She seemed to be enveloped by floating billows of misty tulle which at no place betrayed the dressmaker's art—a human body moving in a filmy cloud. Her eyes, upturned to his, seemed to Mr. Cray quite wonderful.

"I beg your pardon—were you laughing at me?" he asked.

"Of course I am," a soft, mysterious voice answered.

"Guess I'm making some noise," he reflected.

"I like it," was the whispered reply. "Are you very happy?"

Mr. Cray was a little taken aback.

"Just trying to make the thing go a bit," he explained with

a wave of his hand. "Nothing like a noise at a show of this sort. I'm a peach at throwing these streamers. Have a try."

The figure shook her head slightly but crept a little nearer to him. Mr. Cray was both attracted and intrigued.

"What might you represent?" he asked diffidently.

"I am a Spirit," she confided. "This moment you see me; a moment later I shall have vanished."

"Don't hurry," Mr. Cray begged. "What about a bite of supper?"

"Spirits never eat," was the reproachful reply.

"Or drink?" he suggested. "I've a few bottles of Mumm 1906 in here. There's some *paté*, too."

Mr. Cray's attention was momentarily distracted by the passing of some recent acquaintances, with whom he indulged in a few vociferous amenities. When he had finished, he found to his dismay that his companion had vanished in a most mysterious fashion. He was conscious of a momentary pang of disappointment.

"Some voice, that," he ruminated. "And eyes! Guess I'll get down and look for some of the crowd."

He was on the point of descending when a soft tapping at the door of the box caused him to change his mind. Somehow or other the tapping seemed to him as distinctive as the voice had been. He swung around and opened the door eagerly.

"Come right in," he invited cordially. "Say, this is fine! Take a chair and I'll open some champagne."

She floated in and seated herself, looking more than ever like a gray mist. Her eyes remained upon him. There was a sort of subdued rapture in her expression, as though she found something almost worshipful in the portly and corpulent figure of her host.

"How's that seem, young lady?" he asked finally. "A wing of chicken, *paté* and biscuits on the small plate, and a glass of the bubbly, eh?"

"It is very kind of you," the Spirit replied. "I did not come here to eat. I came to be near you."

"That sounds good," Mr. Cray murmured, a little embarrassed—he was scarcely used to such complete conquests.

"You are so full of life," she sighed, "so full of splendid and actual vitality. You remind me—ah!"

She broke off and attacked her chicken. She also sipped, and apparently approved of her wine. Mr. Cray cheered up. The Spirit business had been getting a little upon his nerves, and he welcomed these signs of indubitable humanity. He filled his own glass and raised it.

"Here's health, wealth and happiness!" he ventured in the words of a popular song.

The Spirit sighed but drank. Then she toyed pensively with her empty glass, which her host promptly refilled.

"Health, wealth and happiness," she repeated, her eyes becoming mistier than ever. "I drink with you because you wish it, but these things are not for me."

Mr. Cray, adopting the rôle of a man of respectful gallantry, possessed himself of her hand. He was ashamed to realize how relieved he was to find it warm and soft and human.

"See here," he remonstrated, "aren't you overdoing this Spirit business a little? This is a dance, not a funeral. What about a turn on the floor when you've finished that? I'm not a great performer, but I guess there are others."

She looked at him sadly. Her fingers still rested in his comfortable hand.

"I can only dance with one," she sighed, "and you are not he."

"That's too bad," he protested, "especially on a night like this. Husband, eh? Lover?"

She shook her head more mournfully than ever.

"It is some one who claims me," she declared, "who seldom lets me wander far out of his sight. He terrifies me—but I belong to him. Listen!"

Mr. Cray obeyed.

"I don't know as I can hear anything unusual," he confessed. "Music and laughter and popping of corks sounds a pretty good chorus to me. Come," he went on, glancing at his watch, "it's close on midnight—what about taking that mask off, eh?"

He stretched out his hand, but she eluded him, flitting away into a corner of the box. Once more she listened.

"Can't you hear—a sound like the rushing of the angry wind, like footsteps upon wool, up in the hills? A voice—listen!"

There certainly was a voice, although what it was saying was undistinguishable. A gallant Satan in brilliant scarlet was standing in front of the box. Mr. Cray addressed him affably.

"Were you looking for a Spirit, sir?" he inquired. "She's in here. Step right up and have a glass of wine. —I guess this is your friend," he added, turning round to his guest.

Satan made no reply. His eyes were fixed upon the shadowy figure in the corner of the box. As though in obedience to an unspoken command, she passed out and joined him. A moment later they were gliding across the floor, their feet moving to music—a strange, almost sinister combination. Mr. Cray watched his forehead and stepping out onto the floor, passed his arm round the waist of the first disengaged damsel he came near and plunged into the revels. But nowhere could he see any sign of Satan and the Spirit.

It was one of the most successful balls of the season, and at midnight the fun waxed fast and furious. Mr. Cray found his friends and entertained hospitably. His curiosity concerning acquaintance of the early part of the evening, however, unabated, and he scanned in vain every one of the beauties who searched every corner of the dancing-floor for a sign of her mask. Gray draperies or the more easily distinguishable scarlet of her companion. He came to the conclusion at last that they must have left early, and he was puzzled to find that, side by side with his disappointment, was mingled a certain feeling of relief. His soft voice, with its strange suggestion of coming from a greater distance, and the aroma of mystery by which she had contrived to surround herself, had repelled just as much as it had attracted him. He could not make up his mind, therefore, whether he was relieved or disappointed when, during his period of rest for some hours in the temporarily deserted ballroom, he heard her voice just below the ledge.

"Are you alone?" she asked softly.

"Sure!" Mr. Cray replied. "Come right up."

Once more she disappeared for a moment and then came through the doorway, curiously impersonal, her draperies concealing with matchless art all suggestions of the dancer; she still retained her mask.

"That's against regulations!" he declared, pointing to it. "Mask should come off at midnight. Just let me fix it for you."

She shrank away.

"My mask must not come off," she murmured.

She seemed nervous and terrified; her eyes were shining.

"I am in earnest, please," she begged. "Just let me sit here and be near you. Don't speak to me. Don't take any notice of me."

She sank into a secluded corner, and Mr. Cray scratched his chin and sat watching her thoughtfully. Her partiality for his society, coupled with her aloofness, puzzled him. Mr. Cray hated to be puzzled.

"I don't quite get you," he admitted. "You don't seem looking for any fun like the others. What made you come to this place as this, anyway?"

"Don't ask me, please. If you must know I came because another wished it."

"Chap in scarlet?" he suggested genially.

She shook her head.

"It was not he—it was Saboa," she told him in a whisper which scarcely reached his ears.

"Don't know the lady—or gentleman," Mr. Cray admitted; "but anyway, what made you come back to me again? It isn't the wine, because you're not drinking it. You don't seem to want to talk, either."

"It's your vitality," she told him nervously. "You are full of life—strong, human life. It warms me."

Mr. Cray edged a little farther away.

"I guess this is a stunt I'm not up in," he murmured weakly.

"Of course you don't understand," she went on after a moment's pause. "I seem to you like other women, because I eat and drink and dance—but I am not. My life ebbed out long ago. I belong—somewhere else."

Mr. Cray moved to the farther end of the box.

"Guess I'll go and collect some of the crowd," he muttered. "You make yourself quite comfortable and stay just as long as you like."

"Don't go," she begged. "Don't leave me."

Mr. Cray hesitated. He was a good-natured man, and the little quiver in her voice sounded very human.

"I'll stay if you take your mask off," he suggested.

"You shall see me without my mask within a few hours," she promised, "but not here—not now. Please—please stay. This is my dangerous hour."



"Say, what's doing here?" Mr. Cray asked uneasily.



"You must come," she begged. "They will not let me sleep. They call for you all the time."

"Is it!" Mr. Cray murmured, this time making for the door. "If you'll excuse me, I'll just—"

"Dangerous to me, I mean—not to you," she interrupted. "Please do not go. I am afraid of drifting off—of losing myself. My hold is so slight."

"Let me give you a sandwich," Mr. Cray suggested.

"Oh, you don't understand!" she moaned.

"I'm with you there," he assented heartily. "I don't."

"How can I explain!"

"I'm not particular how you do it," Mr. Cray replied, "but I've got the idea that you're playing some game on me, and if you're not inclined to put me wise, I'd just as soon—without wishing to seem inhospitable—that you quit it."

She began to tremble.

"But I don't want to go," she protested.

"Then stay right where you are," he replied, "and I'll take an amble around and see how things are looking."

"Would it help you to understand," she asked, "if I told you who I really am?"

"I guess so," he assented. "My name's Cray,—Joseph P. Cray of Seattle, when I'm at home,—and I don't take any stock in pooks."

She leaned a little forward. Her eyes glowed as though with wonder at the portent of her words.

"I am Saboa," she whispered, "Christine Saboa. . . . Ah, how horrible!"

The box was suddenly and riotously invaded by a horde of a dozen or more revelers. The duties of hospitality for a few moments absorbed Mr. Cray's whole attention. When he looked around, at last, the chair in the corner was empty.

"Hello! Anyone seen my little cloud drift out?" he demanded.

"He means his little sunshine," a fluffy-haired Columbine declared, passing her hand through his arm. "I'm here, dear. No cloud shall ever come between us."

"That's a comfort, anyhow," Mr. Cray acknowledged. "But honest, didn't you see anyone here when you came in—a small person in kind of gray, billowy floating stuff of some sort?"

There was a moment's blank silence, then a roar of laughter.

"Cray, old bean, you're seeing things," declared a young scion of the Stock Exchange, temporarily gorgeous in ruffles and lace.

"The box was empty save for your gracious self," a flushed and bedraggled Hamlet declared, his mouth full of sandwich. "To that we can all attest."

"Anyone ever heard the name of Christine Saboa?" Mr. Cray inquired, keeping a tight hold upon himself.

"Christine Saboa?" a monk, who had hitherto been silent, repeated. "She was a wonderful Danish medium, who nearly sent New York crazy last year."

"And where is she now?" Mr. Cray asked.

"She died last November," the monk replied.

Mr. Cray poured himself out a glass of wine, spilling a few spots upon the tablecloth.

"Here's confusion to all spooks!" he exclaimed. "Now," he added, snatching up his whistle, "let's get outside and make a noise."

They sallied out. The monk, however, detained his host for a moment after the others had departed. He looked around as though to be sure that they were alone in the box.

"Mr. Cray," he said, "you flatter my disguise."

"Not for one second, Inspector," Mr. Cray replied with a smile. "I'm not quite fresh enough, though, to go bawling 'Scotland Yard' all over the place."

"I apologize," the monk declared.

"Anything special on?"

The monk shook his head.

"There are always one or two of us at these affairs," he said. "I've spotted a couple of well-known thieves already, but there's nothing particular doing. They know we're here, all right. I was interested in that name I heard—Christine Saboa."

Mr. Cray looked uneasily around.

"She sort o' had me guessing," he confessed.

"Christine Saboa," the monk went on, "was not only a very wonderful medium, but she was also a great collector."

"Of what?"

"Jewelry—anything she could lay her hands on," the inspector replied. "It was not until after her death that she was even suspected. They say that she must have got away with a quarter of a million pounds' worth of diamonds from New York alone."

"You're not taking any stock from the fact that she called herself a medium, I suppose?"

The monk scratched his chin.

"Men like you and me, Mr. Cray, sir," he said, "who take an interest in crime, are bound to be materialists. Still, I've learned in my profession never to be obstinate about anything. There are a good many intelligent and well-informed people who believe in spooks, and I am telling you frankly that this Christine Saboa had, without doubt, some exceptional gifts. They say that she could hypnotize a strong man in three minutes."

"You're sure she's dead?"

"So far as our information goes," the monk replied, "she died in New York last November."

"Then I don't mind telling you," Mr. Cray confided, "that this little bit of gray cloud who's rather got on my nerves this evening—some eye she's got, but she kept on behaving like a half-baked spook—told me just before you all came in that her name was Christine Saboa."

"That's interesting," the monk acknowledged. "Let's have a stroll round and see if we can see anything of her."

Three times the two men made the circuit of the hall in vain. The Spirit had disappeared.

MR. CRAY stood on the steps of the Albert Hall at four o'clock that morning, paused for a moment to take breath, and sent a mighty volume of raucous sound quivering through the early stillness.

"Rah, rah, rah! Hah, hah, hah! Rah, rah, rah!"

There was a little commotion amongst the unfortunate bystanders. A pleasant-faced officer in uniform, who was standing on the step below Mr. Cray, with a muffled-up form upon his arm, started as though he had been shot and nearly dropped the kit-bag he was carrying.

"For God's sake," he exclaimed, looking over his shoulder, "what are you making that noise for?"

"I want my automobile," Mr. Cray explained cheerfully. "I've got an American chauffeur who knows the old college yell. I guess he's heard me."

"I should say he has, if he's this side of the Strand," the officer commented dryly.

"He's not only heard it, but here he is," Mr. Cray observed complacently as his limousine stole through the tangle of vehicles and drew up to the steps. "That's worth a shout, eh?"

There were many in the waiting crowd who looked wistfully at the car, for a drizzling rain was falling, and taxicabs were scarce. Mr. Cray looked round at the officer and his companion and addressed the former.

"Can I give you a lift anywhere?" he asked.

"I'm going to the Milan Hotel, but I don't mind going a bit out of my way as long as it isn't entirely in the opposite direction."

The officer stepped forward almost eagerly.

"If you could give my wife and me a lift as far as Moon Street, Chelsea," he said, "it would be awfully good of you. I ordered a taxicab, but I'm afraid it's gone off with some one else. My wife's terribly tired, too."

"Step right in," Mr. Cray invited hospitably. "Tell the chauffeur your number, Captain. Let me give you a cushion, madam; pretty tiring—My God!"

They were all three in the car now, the officer with his head out of the window, directing the chauffeur. A black domino had up to the present concealed the whole of the lady's form, but the eyes, glowing so steadily into his through the folds of her black lace mantilla, were unmistakable. The faintest of weary smiles played upon her lips as she gazed into Mr. Cray's thunderstruck face. The officer withdrew his head from the window.

"Major Hartopp, my name is, sir," he said. "I can't tell you how grateful my wife and I are."

"Joseph P. Cray is my name," the other rejoined. "I've come across your

good lady before this evening."

"Yes," the Spirit murmured sleepily from her corner, "Mr. Cray was very kind to me. He gave me wine and let me sit down in his box."

"And I understood you to say that your name was Christine Saboa," Mr. Cray observed, too eager for some measure of elucidation to be anything but ruthless.

"I am Christine Saboa," was the reply, spoken in a dull, hollow tone. "The whole world knows that."

Mr. Cray glanced across at his male vis-à-vis. Major Hartopp sighed slightly and shook his head with a warning glance toward the figure at his side, and Mr. Cray, understanding his gesture to mean that his wife was to be humored, relapsed into silence. The car turned southward, passed down Sloane Street and plunged into the purlieu of Chelsea, finally pulling up at what was apparently a pleasant, little-frequented thoroughfare.

"You must come in and have a whisky and soda," the young soldier insisted hospitably.

Mr. Cray shook his head.

(Continued on page 94)



The monk shook his head. "There are always one or two of us at these affairs," he said. "We've spotted a couple of well-known thieves."



BEAUTY

By RUPERT HUGHES

The story so far:

Illustrated by W. T. BENDA

MRS. ROANTREE'S willful and beautiful niece Clelia Blakeney had disappeared from her Adirondack country-place—clad, it would seem, only in night-dress and slippers.

For days they searched everywhere through a blinding snow-storm: Burnley the painter, Randel the sculptor, and Larrick, a young Texan. One day Larrick and Nancy Fleet, who had stayed with Mrs. Roantree, went out on snowshoes again to search the lake shore. They found the ice thick and windswept of snow, and Nancy went back for her skates. And then it was that Larrick found Clelia Blakeney—lying face upward, frozen fast in the ice, a gash on her forehead.

That night it was Larrick who kept a strange death-watch: through the window of the room where he sat could be seen on the snowy, moonlit veranda the beautiful, dreadful statue of Clelia Blakeney, locked in the block of ice which had been cut from the lake and hauled thither by ox-sled. . . .

Larrick had been a penniless cowboy when he saved the life of that gilded young aristocrat Norry Frewin in a barroom row. Later he had found a cinnabar pocket that brought him a quarter of a million dollars. A trip to New York had followed; he had looked up Frewin; and that grateful young man had introduced him to Clelia. . . . And now he sat here, keeping watch over all that was left of her—himself aflame with longing to "get" the man who, he assumed, had caused her death. . . .

Larrick's mind went back to the scenes of his acquaintance with Clelia; his flirtation with Nancy Fleet, and his meeting with Nancy's strange pitiful cousin Louise Coykendall, whose husband had fallen out of love with her and sought a divorce. . . .

It was while on a visit to the country estate of Norry Frewin's father that Larrick met Clelia, and her virginal young beauty quite won him away from Nancy Fleet. He was perplexed and infuriated when Clelia told him that Coykendall was a special friend of hers; he was troubled, too, by his rivalry with Norry for Clelia's favor. Frewin, indeed, had been behaving queerly enough

—had posted off to New York, then returned as suddenly, told Larrick he was in trouble and wanted to go up to his Adirondack camp till it blew over, and asked Larrick to go with him.

Arrived at Frewin's mountain residence they found the house burned down and sought shelter at Mrs. Roantree's elaborate "camp," to which Clelia and a party of others had already come; Nancy Fleet also joined the party. . . . One moonlight night in a canoe on the lake with Clelia, Larrick took Clelia into his arms and she responded to his kisses. Frewin met them at the shore, seized Larrick by the shoulders and. . . .

Larrick woke from his reverie with a start; it was not Frewin but Randel who grasped his shoulders; and Clelia was not standing beside him but was without on the veranda locked in the ice-casket.

CHAPTER XLII

STILL a little dizzy from the impetus of his dream, Larrick felt the earth swim beneath him as he set feet again on the solid ground. During a night he had cruised about his whole past life, with the speed and silence of the Flying Dutchman. And now he had crashed into the shore, and he must walk the land upon sea-legs giddily.

His body was tingling with the inaction of his long trance in the chair by the window. His mind was a-tingle like "feet asleep," and thought was an anguish he could not shake off.

The shock was like a hammer-smash. Randel had hurled him almost from the arms of Clelia, alive in memory; and as his eyes made out the world darkling in the slow sunrise, he descried through the window Clelia dead and embalmed in crystal, still standing at prayer, all life arrested stock still as if a voice had cried: "Halt!"

Larrick stared at her as Lot might have stood marveling at his wife, one moment a woman who ran with reverted gaze, and the next moment a pillar of salt.

It had been Larrick's demand in the far ago of yesterday afternoon that the sculptor Randel and the painter Burnley should combine their arts in a monument of Clelia's graces. Between then and now Larrick had wandered so wide in reverie and dream that he had forgotten the day before in the fog of the weeks and months before.

Randel had to remind him of it all as he led him from the cold house, where the fire had died, into the terrifying cold of the outdoors where the winter was at full rigor.

Randel could speak here with less risk of waking the other members of the household, whose interference he wished to avoid. He muttered to Larrick, his breath like white smoke in the frosty air: "Don't you remember? You wanted a statue or something made of poor little Clelia. Well, I've decided to make one, and I need your help."

Larrick's teeth were chattering with the cold less than with the dread of Clelia's ice-sheeted ghost standing before him. Randel mumbled on: "I'll do my best to preserve her memory—the memory of her body. If the people in there find it out, they'll try to stop me. They'll sleep for some time yet, I hope. There's another reason for hurry. When the guide gets back, he'll probably bring a sheriff or a coroner or some horrible meddler along, to prevent us or to drive me mad with questions."

"For all I know, I may be committing some crime in doing this, but I'm going through with it, if I have to spend the rest of my life in the penitentiary. If you are afraid to be involved, go on back."

"I don't know just what you're thinking of," said Larrick, "but I'm not afraid of anybody or anything except losing Clelia."

The sculptor explained: "I'm going to take a cast of Clelia just as she is."

"How?"

"Help me, and you'll see. You've heard of life-masks and death-masks."

"I've heard of 'em, but I've never seen one."

"Well, you'll see one now unlike anything else that ever was, I imagine. I'm going to make a death-mask—you could almost say a life-mask—of Clelia's whole body. I may not live long myself, but if I can bequeath this to the only child I'll ever have,—posterity,—what does anything else matter? We artists are like the insects that Fabre tells about; we have one supreme instinct—to sacrifice ourselves to the future. We are always committing what you might call productive suicide. But we mustn't waste time here. We've got to move this block of ice over to my studio-hut, and it's not going to be easy."

In one of the many little cabins about the camp Randel had improvised an atelier. Planning to spend the winter in the Adirondacks for his lungs' sake, he had arranged to keep busy for his soul's sake. He had shipped up the equipment of sculpture, tools for coercing clay, wax and marble, and oiled clay, wax and a little marble to be coerced, materials for armatures and for molds, plaster of Paris and gelatine. He wanted to be able to make casts of his work for preservation and future use.

He studied the ice inclosing the statue he would release, as marble envelopes the occult form the sculptor divines within.

Randel mused aloof, professionally aloof from every consideration but the artistic:

"Somebody said that sculpture was an easy art because all you have to do is to take a block of marble and break off what you don't want. That's the case here, except that we've got to get rid of that ice very carefully. If we try to knock it or chop it off, we may break away a piece so big that it might carry with it a fragment of our statue; the poor child is ice herself now, and—"

LARRICK did not need to cry "Stop!" He quivered from an assault of intolerable imagination. Randel forbore to put words to the horror, and nodded to Larrick to lay hold of the burden.

The ice was hard to manage. It burned and stuck to the bare hands. When they put on gloves, its weight taxed their skill. But somehow, with awkward tugging and shoving, they lowered it to the horizontal and pushed it from the porch, then slid it across the snow. It broke through the crust at times, and the lifting of it was a grievous toil.

It was hard for Larrick to master his own revulsion against such profanation. He felt like an uncouth baggage-man mauling a casketed saint. The ice was a huge prism; at every turn it flashed new colors, quivered with tremulous liquors of strange tints that transformed Clelia eerily.

A troublesome obstacle intervened at the door of Randel's hut,

a granite boulder set there for ornament. It was necessary to hoist the shaft erect again and work it round from corner to corner. At the crucial moment, Randel slipped and fell. He would have dragged the column down upon him if Larrick had not hugged it and flung himself back.

His feet slid too, and the shaft lurched and toppled to one side against the sharp edges of the boulder. Larrick tried to brace the fall with his own body, but great splinters of ice split and cracked, and a long mass fell from between his arms. When he caught hold anew, he found that one of his hands embraced one of Clelia's shoulders.

Through his glove he could feel first the apple roundness, then the awful unyieldingness and the hideous cold. He remembered again the terrible words he had read in Parkman's description of the frozen Indian: "With tooth and claw the famished wildcat strives in vain to pierce the frigid marble of his limb."

Only a few nights ago he had felt that shoulder of Clelia's in his palm. He remembered now the mellowness of it, the warmth, the supple strength, the motion of the muscles gliding a little beneath the skin. And now—he clasped granite. He wavered and would have fallen if Randel had not scrambled to his feet and caught the shaft and steadied it, and Larrick with it, until Larrick could regain his balance and compel his soul to the repose it needed.

The sculptor's training, his experience and his ideals had given him something of the apathy of a surgeon who can and must suppress sympathy, and with an academic loftiness wield inhumanity for humanity's sake.

But Larrick was like the lover, the husband who sees his beloved going to the operating room, and has no drug of habit to deaden his prophetic torment.

CHAPTER XLIII

LARRICK was rather a hindrance than a help to Randel, but at length they brought the shaft inside the cabin and closed the door upon the mystery. Now Larrick felt himself a peasant in the laboratory of an alchemist, a wizard's den full of strange machineries for necromantic purposes. Randel made a page of him, commanding him sharply to do this or that, fetch this or that, lend a hand or get out of the way.

He was revolted almost to flight or to forcible prevention by the gruesomeness of the work, and the harrowing familiarity that Randel observed in taking the cast of every portion of Clelia's body, which was hardly so much covered as emphasized by the silken gown about it. The fact that he kept the figure standing enforced the thought that Clelia must somehow be aware of all that was done.

At times Larrick wanted to beat Randel down as a kind of ghoulish degenerate, a slave-buyer fondling a shackled virgin and committing sacrilege upon her sacred flesh.

He was restrained by the counter-horror of burying away in the earth such beauty without a memorial of it. This seemed a more wanton deed. Randel was robbing the grave, indeed, but only of the beauty that it would not prize or preserve. So Larrick attended the sculptor as his raw apprentice.

First there was the ice to remove. This was done with small chisels, carefully directed by the dextrousness of a sculptor. Larrick carried the broken ice to the door and flung it away.

Randel released only the face and shoulders at first, till Clelia was like a bust of herself upon a pedestal. The hair that floated as it were in the ice was a problem, but Randel freed only the front of it, brushing away the dust of ice with care.

Meanwhile he had filled a box with plaster of Paris, wetted it down and stirred it till it was like thick cream. He lifted out a double handful of this and approaching Clelia, suddenly spread it, blotting her face from sight in a white blur.

Larrick cried out at this, and his fists clenched to strike even as his knees gave way beneath him. Randel, walking back to the box for more plaster, growled:

"If you're going to be a sick fool, go on away and don't bother me."

He took pity on the uninitiated weakling and said, largely to lash his own reluctant faculties to the supreme opportunity:

"I've done this to living people, and it didn't hurt them. I oiled their skin a little to save them pain when the plaster was taken off, and I put quills in their nostrils so that they could breathe. But I didn't hurt them, and I won't hurt Clelia."

When Larrick had forced back his qualms, he said:

"But that scar in her forehead, the wound-scar—what of that?"



He lifted the white mass from Clelia's face, revealing her features to them.

You may change it so that the weapon that killed her can't be identified."

"The plaster will keep a perfect record," said Randel. "It is marvelous what it will do. If you should write on a piece of paper with the end of a match so that the eye could not read your words, I could take a plaster cast of the writing and get a visible record of it. The finger-prints, the finest, tiniest wrinkles, will be caught by the plaster."

"I took a cast of a pair of clasped hands once, and you could see the little lift one muscle gave another in their pressure. It's marvelous. We could take this cast into court."

Under Randel's manipulation the exquisite features of Clelia were soon lost deep in a thick, white, flat rind. He glanced at his watch and said to Larrick.

"Make a note of the time. Remind me when fifteen minutes have passed. It will take that long for each bit to set. I'm taking the face in a single mold, you see. Now I'll do the throat and then the shoulders, and then the hair in front."

With Clelia's face masked, Larrick felt a little less repugnance, and by and by a fascination. Randel asked him if he had read Benvenuto Cellini's thrilling account of how he made the sectional molds for his statue of Perseus and poured into them the molten bronze.

LARRICK shook his head.

"I'm doing just the opposite," Randel sighed. "Poor little Clelia was burning alive the other day. She was the molten bronze leaping and flaming, and now— Strange and pitiful! To think that if Clelia were a trout and had been frozen in the ice, we could melt the ice and the fish would swim away as alive as ever. But our precious Clelia can never be recalled again. Some day in the future the scientists may master the problem, but it will be too late for this little girl. Oh, God, she was so alive, so glorious; but she's beyond us somewhere!"

"All I'm taking is her outline. All I shall have will be the shell of her, and not even that—just the figure of her. Clelia's form is only an invisible sheath. Yet that was what we knew her by."

"How could we know her in heaven if she lost that envelope? Yet why should she have nostrils and lips and eyelids and hair and shoulders and breasts and loins and legs in heaven? She would have no air to breathe, no food to eat, no children to bear or to suckle, no errands to run, nothing earthly to do, would she?"

"I don't know," was Larrick's humble answer; and he humbled Randel with it.

"Neither do I," said Randel. "But it's a strange thing. A sculptor would swear that only a godlike sculptor could have modeled the human form; yet science tells us that it was evolved in thousands of centuries, and we share all our elements with the animals in some degree."

"It takes so little to make a woman beautiful or to make her ugly; but oh, the difference to me!—and to her!—and to history!"

As he wandered on, his mind purposeless and roving, his hands deft and positive, he made strange divisions in the soft plaster with one of his modeling tools, keeping one mold cleanly separated from another and making little knobs that he called keys.

After he had obliterated the visage, the throat and the shoulders, and built up a white miter against Clelia's hair, he began to break the ice away down to her waist. He exercised the utmost care not to disarrange the folds of the silken nightgown. He pondered aloud, talking to keep his rebellious emotions in discipline. His language was a trifle exalted, as always when he talked of art.

"What beautiful things folds and wrinkles are in drapery! Some of the fool Puritans think that nakedness is more wicked than concealment, but it's the imagination that furnishes the evil thought, not the revelation. Look at those silken ridges that cluster round her little breast. They are like work of a skilled draughtsman."

"This statue of Clelia will be a miracle of drapery; it will be multitudinous with countless fine wrinkles, like the drapery of the little bas-reliefs of the young Victory girls on the temple of the Niké Apteros in Athens. You never saw them, I suppose. They're beyond all praise. But this will be beyond them. It will be beyond anything that was ever done, for beauty."

He shook tears of pity from his eyes and reminded himself of his official duty to beauty, his priestcraft. He built a thick breastplate of plaster along the girl's whole torso. Where her bosom was revealed by the open nightgown, he laid on the plaster with a heavy hand. Where the silk intervened, he first powdered the delicate surface with a fine spray, flicking it from his fingers cautiously until the slightest elevations of the fabric were covered, then working more broadly.

With a sculptor's habit and lore his hands followed the curves of the muscles, whose names and offices he knew, sweeping down the varied planes of the chest, swathing the breasts with spherical gestures.

Larrick forgot to watch the hour, but Randel's schooled fingers told him when the plaster was hard enough to be removed.

Suddenly, to Larrick's astonishment, he lifted a white mass from Clelia's face, revealing her to them and them to her again. For though her eyes were hidden under their arched lids, there seemed to be vision within. Larrick trembled, and the deeds that had fascinated him by their technic when her face was veiled became once more something frightful and shameless.

He recoiled from the first mold when Randel held it before him. It was a deep intaglio of a face, the very inversion of Clelia's exquisite mien, a confusion of hollows where her features had advanced.

Randel set this mold on the floor of the cabin in a corner, and went back to his labor. He covered the praying hands that had protruded for a while from the blanket of plaster. He made three molds for the hands, and poured plaster down between the palms, then wrapped them as if in big mittens.

After a little study, Randel broke the ice away from Clelia's entire back.

"I'll make only one mold here, I think," he said, and with great caution flicked the plaster again upon the wrinkles and covered them all from where the gown began across the shoulderblades.

Larrick neither watched nor listened. He was piling wood in the fire. Like one of Noah's better sons, he kept his eyes averted, while Randel, who had the priestly franchise of the artist, completed this mold, and later, tore away the transparent girdle of ice and girded the awesome fruitless loins of Clelia in plaster.

There were some fifteen molds in all to be built, and each as it was removed was laid in the corner. The molds of the hair alone failed to satisfy Randel. He made one of the back of the head and the hair above it. He pointed out to Larrick, or at least informed him, for he would not look, that each of the infinitesimal loose tendrils of hair was drawn free without difficulty, leaving a minute tube or twisted canal in the plaster. But he would have to work over the whole frame of her floating tresses, for, he explained, hair is one of the unconquerable problems of sculpture.

He knelt to make molds like greaves for the knees and shins. It was all miracle to Larrick, and when he could shake off the sense of immodesty, of sacrilege and dread, he was glad to be the stoker who kept the plaster of Paris stirring, fetched and carried the tools, got sworn at or thanked, and toted the wood from the woodpile to the furnace in the chimney.

The wood was within doors. Several days before the blizzard had come, Randel had instructed Jeffers, the guide, to pile at least a cord of fuel against the side wall of the cabin. Randel had never foreseen his present unheard of task, but he had wanted to be kept warm at his work and to be saved from carrying in snow-incrusted frozen wood from outside when the frenzy was on him. Nor when the frenzy was on him did he like to call in a servant or permit anyone to invade his presence. For an artist in the throes of creation is like a bridegroom; and what is holy in the embrace of the Muse becomes obscene before alien eyes.

But Randel did not object to Larrick's presence now, for the man was like a child in his innocence of art. And his very horror of the procedure gave it an enthralling excitement, a wizardry.

The fire itself seemed to Larrick part of diabolic magic, and it was gluttonous for the pine that bled resin and shrieked as it was bitten by the flames and sent up crimson ribbons of beauty and terror.

RANDEL had kept the form of Clelia far from the fire lest it melt the ice too quickly. Only his zeal could have held him to the task, only his consecration to the capture of fugitive grace and its imprisonment in a shelter from oblivion. He loved Clelia, and loved her the more, the more he persisted in this epithalamial intimacy. Again and again he had to wrestle down a ferocious impulse to slay himself or to run away from his deed. The occasion was unique, and fleetingly brief. Once he yielded to a cowardice of chivalry, the chance would be gone forever. Respect for Clelia's modesty would be a shameful indifference in him to the higher respect for her angelic beauty. So he forced himself to sacrifice her to the everlastingness of her own grace.

But from time to time the sculptor, whose blood was thin and whose fingers turned to ice in their icy labor, had to borrow warmth for his livid hands and for his shuddering soul at the

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By Rupert Hughes

billows of warmth rolling invisibly from the flames that battered upon the logs, destroying the things that gave them birth, like devastating children eating up their own parents—like wastrels, like the world gone mad in the war and in its aftermath still burning up its own hopes.

Once Randel said, as he held his hands out to the fire: "Is anything more beautiful or more shapely than a flame? Yet what is it? Oxygen combines with fuel, and flames result, but they come from nowhere and go nowhere and are nothing but a passing condition. Yet each flame, like a wave on the sea, seems to have an individuality. People go through the world like that. Their souls agitate a certain amount of matter as flames do wood; then the souls are no longer there, and the wood is ashes.

a couch with them, lovingly as a father preparing a bed for his slain daughter. And there they lifted and laid her.

She looked a recumbent marble effigy on a catafalque. They worshiped her sorrowfully a moment, then drew the covers over her as if to keep her warm and let her sleep at peace.

CHAPTER XLIV

AND so at last the work was done. In the far corner of the cabin stood a huddle of plaster blocks, shapeless themselves, as if a pile of loose rubble had rolled from a hillside. Yet in them, strangely shredded and divided, was all the form of

She halted him only when she made him understand her threat:

"If you go in there to die, you've got to take me with you."



"How many beautiful women have set the world on fire? And where are they now? Where will those wonderful girls and great men go who are burning up the clay now in the world? If it were not for this statue we are making, Clelia would be as lost as that blaze leaping up there now. See how fierce and lithe and rapturous it is. But now where is it? Clelia was a flame, but she shall not altogether die."

This frenzy warmed him, and he returned to his labor reassured. At length the last of the casts was made, and Clelia's little feet were bared again from the plaster buskins Randel had built about them with a more perfect fit than the most careful shoemaker ever achieved. And now it was permitted that the girl should rest. She had stood erect so long that it seemed she must be tired, though she had lost the pleasant gift of weariness along with all the other earthly privileges.

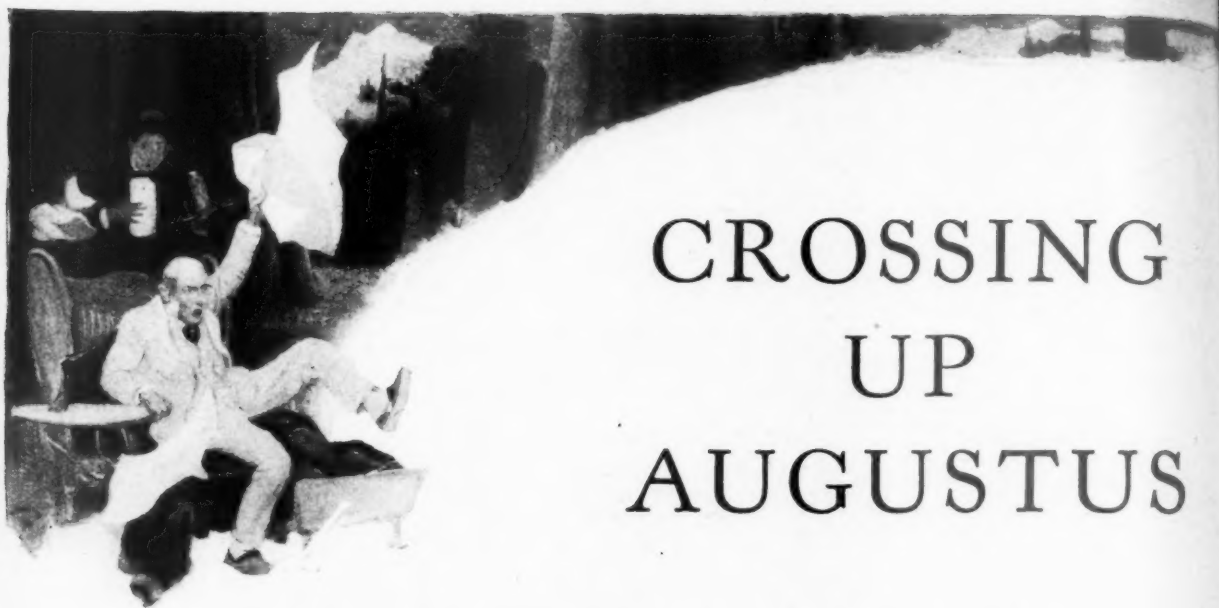
It was fitting that the bride should rest who had waited so patiently for her white robes to be patterned and tried on. There was no bed, no divan in the studio. The only long level place for her repose was the pile of wood.

Randel upheld her in shivering arms while Larrick flung across the logs a number of rugs and a few old tapestries Randel had brought along to hang upon the rough walls. Larrick spread

Clelia's beauty in its mystic integrity, as the world and the moons, the stars, the suns and the suns of suns and many a cosmos made up of lesser cosmoi and the universe combined of countless interlocking universes, were all contained in old Chaos who fathered Time and Order.

Rubble fallen from a hillside could be heaped into a new hillside. The catastrophes of earthquakes, the cannonades of volcanoes and the slow squeeze of oceanic pressure had built up long sierras, billowy foothills and peaks where the snows found an eternal home. Distance and the blurred eyes of men called these accidents "landscapes" and admired them, revered them, loved and fought for them, imagining intentional form where there was only fortuity, seeing a god reclining on a crag, finding his hammer-mark in a valley, exacting an awe of beauty from the spill of a broken river over a high ledge, discovering a sinuous nymph in a brook, a dryad in an oak. . . . Poetry grew up thence, and prayer, superstition and altars, sacrifice and self-sacrifice, patriotism and love of home, science and fabulous religions, encyclopædias and grammars, and the strange madnnesses we call the arts.

Randel stood looking at the disarray of casts, and with a restoring cigarette poised in his hand like an added lean and lighted finger mused upon his work. (Continued on page 107)



CROSSING UP AUGUSTUS

By PETER CLARK MACFARLANE

Illustrated by DOUGLAS DUER

AND while she's waiting for her final from Reno," said Matt Hammel, "the girl, by Jupiter, is out here in a stifling crack in the mountains, doing assessment work on a couple of claims that were given her by some great-uncle or other as a wedding present."

Matt was swayed by a mixture of sympathy and indignation. His sympathy ran to a lady waiting in the outer office. His indignation ran straight at the person to whom he was speaking, his youthful superior, Glen McWilliams, financial agent of the Desert Exploration Company, because that individual did not leap up to unsheath a lance in behalf of a lady in a desert. Instead—with a decisive shake of the head:

"No divorcées in ours," he announced, while a frown of mild annoyance knitted his handsome brows. "They're just two types, Matt—injured wives, for whom one always feels sympathy, or else they're brazen coquettes, trying to drag an adventure out of every man they meet. One that would go way out there by herself like that—she's the latter type, no doubt."

"Seems rather a modest little woman," suggested Hammel, recalling a pair of moss-agate eyes of unexplored depths.

"Then she's the tearful type, Matt," deduced the financial agent apprehensively. "I'm more afraid of them."

"Your crust is hard, Glen, I'll tell the world," deplored Matt. "Doing the assessment work herself, you say?" Glen asked.

"Mighty near!" ejaculated the office-manager with the fervor of fresh hope. "She's got old Jack Hart out there, but Jack is so ancient that the oldest Indian doesn't recall when he Piuted into these parts—"

"But suppose we do buy the claims and organize," interrupted the financial agent, "suppose we do, and then some question of a half-divorced husband and title deeds comes up; or we've got to hunt friend husband on two continents to get his signature; or our money goes into escrow and then he gets contrary when we find him, and wont sign. No." Glen McWilliams waved his hand conclusively. "No! Shoo her off, Matt—that's a good fellow."

The young man swung round in his swivel chair and set himself again to the study of the blue-print which had occupied his attention at the first.

"Her claims are right in line with the most probable projection of the mineralized belt." Hammel, with a finger, traced this projection off the edge of the blue-print into space to the west, and stood triumphant, as if this newly adduced circumstance must surely attain his objective.

"Congratulate her for me!" said Glen with easy urbanity, and lifting his hands, allowed the blue-print to roll together.

"Ice-water! Too much ice-water in the veins," murmured Matt with a sigh as he went out toward his own office.

But in the hall the office-manager was startled to recognize a figure in motoring garb, with considerable of the desert dust upon him, who swept by with a swift acknowledging grunt and an instant later had laid his vigorous hand upon the financial agent's private door and entered unannounced.

Glen, who sat thumbing some assayers' reports, looked up, then rose with alacrity.

"Ah, McWilliams!" said a hard voice, but with crisp cordiality.

With one motion the long ulster that had enveloped the figure was thrown off; with a second the goggles were unclashed, thus adding a pair of inscrutable black eyes to the features already in evidence.

"Why, good morning, Mr. Nelson!" Young McWilliams extended a hearty hand, his face wreathed in smiles.

There were two reasons for this swift abandon of that pose of imperturbability which the financial agent mostly wore. One of these was that Augustus Parker Nelson was vice-president and general manager of the Desert Exploration Company, and as such held Glen's job in the hollow of his hand. The other was that the vice-president was Glen's ideal of a successful man.

"It was the report on the Cuttybone Select Group of claims that brought me up," explained Mr. Nelson, oozing eagerness. "Judging by the reports, that property is almost ripe for somebody to make a killing." The speaker's white teeth gleamed; his wide smile was infectious. Glen smiled also, and placed before his chief the assay reports his eye had just been scanning.

"Encouraging—encouraging—all encouraging!" crowed Nelson, his dark eyes snapping. "Now let's have a look at the property."

A SENSE of the imminence of something big got into Glen's mind as the face of his masterful superior glowed there before him. It was, in consequence, but a few minutes before his roadster was kicking the fine white powder of the desert roadway into dusty clouds, and before the two men dismounted upon the sandy soil and rocky barrens of the Cuttybone Select Group.

The north shaft had been showing color for a week; with each day's depth the out-turn had been better; today's rock was the best of all. The vice-president examined it.

"Good. . . . Good. . . . Better, and better yet!" he gurgled, following along from one day's sackings to another. "And now what does the south shaft show?"

The south shaft was fifteen hundred yards away on another claim.

"Working in vein material, but no values yet," explained the financial agent. But when they came to the south shaft, the smoke of a shot was just drifting out, and when a bucketful of the new rock came up, the flakes of ruby silver appeared in the first lump Glen took into his hand. Nelson gloated over it, then snatched up another piece and another.

"It's there!" he exclaimed with boyish enthusiasm. "It's there." He turned and sighted along the brown, broken face of the ridge, with outcrop appearing here and there over almost a mile, to where the tip of the gallows frame of the north shaft gleamed yellow against the drab of the hill. "What a stretch of it, McWilliams!" he murmured, and for a time was silent and contemplative, while the ferment of a great idea sizzled in his brain and reflected its sheen upon his swarthy features.

"Glen!" he said presently, in a lowered voice at once impressive and confidential, but with a tremor of excitement in it. "Glen, there comes to every man his chance—his chance to make a fortune. Mine has come to me today—yours has come to you—in these Cuttybone claims."

It was inevitable that Glen should respond to the thrill in the voice of the older man, that he should feel flattered at this frank inclusion of his fortunes with those of Mr. Nelson.

"Yes?" he half-answered, half-inquired, leaning forward and wetting an eager lip.

"Can you keep a close mouth, and can you obey orders absolutely?" asked the man with the black fox face, eyes narrowing.

"I have never been noted for blabbing," remarked Glen with dignity, "and up to the present time, Mr. Nelson, I think you have never had to complain of me for failure to carry out instructions."

"Yes, yes; I know that," confessed the vice-president quickly. "But this is a situation,"—and the speaker's voice was lowered this time till it became a graveyard whisper, while the scheming features took on a look of sharper cunning,— "a situation that will require a combination of the most delicate handling and the boldest action. Can you understand, Glen,"—the tone now was most ingratiating,— "how, in the very interests of the Company itself, it might become necessary for two of its officers to take all of its operations in regard to a certain matter, into their own hands for a time—in order to assure that secrecy which is absolutely essential to the good of all?"

The restless, avid eyes seemed boring into the very soul of the younger man.

"Yes sir," admitted Glen judiciously, "I can see how such an extraordinary contingency might arise."

"Very well; it has arisen." Something clicked, almost like the click of a trap. "From this moment you and I must act together, in absolute harmony and in absolute secrecy, with utter disregard of the right, existence or interest of anybody else in the Desert Exploration Company, so far as the handling of the Cuttybone Select group of properties is concerned. This thing is big—very big." Nelson's gesture not only included the south shaft at which they were standing but the north shaft and the east shaft as well. "It's far too big to explode in San Francisco.

This is a New York proposition. Enrichment!" He turned with his hand to sweep the row of sample sacks. "Enrichment should increase from day to day now."

"Almost from shot to shot," averred Glen proudly.

"Keep it dark, McWilliams." The mesmeric eye of the vice-president glowed steadily upon the financial agent. "From this on, not one word to the San Francisco office as to these discoveries. All reports you have sent hitherto are safely in my pocket."

"But Mr. Cuttybone!" murmured Glen, mentioning with something like awe the feared name of the president of the D. E. Co., a traditional figure of supposed great power whom none of the subordinate employees of the company ever saw.

"Mr. Cuttybone," declared Nelson oracularly, "is negligible—in this project. He is very rich and with many irons in the fire. He is a sort of business recluse, extremely irritable, not in the best of health, bothered by private griefs, and just now off on a little vacation. His name, his credit, will be valuable to us. His counsel we shall struggle along without to the happy moment when we can display our hands, show what we have accomplished and hear him say, 'Bless you, my children,' as we add another column of figures to his nicely flourishing bank-account."

Turning toward the shaft, Nelson directed: "Keep going down, but be sure that nobody suspects success. In fact, you might give the counter-impression. You can strengthen this by stopping work on the east shaft entirely, and setting a bunch of men to trenching on the surface as if in search of the vein. But sink the north and south shafts fast—fast—especially the north."

Nelson threw out further details of his rapidly forming plans as they drove back to town. So swiftly had the project ripened that they were back in the office by eleven o'clock; but Augustus Parker Nelson did not remain there. He was too restless, too alive to the possibilities that lay ahead; and so he buzzed up and down the streets of the enterprising little mining town, oozing an atmosphere of doubt and pessimism as to his own company's Cuttybone properties, but interested or capable of becoming interested in holdings in that vicinity.

As a result, when he came in at one o'clock to the office of the D. E. Co., with the benevolent intent of taking Glen out to luncheon with him, he brought with him and passed over to that young man signed and witnessed options covering the Dooley, the Jewel, and the Grant C. groups of mines, all lying contiguous to or upon the same general formation as the Cuttybone Select properties. These options covered the right to purchase within thirty days at prices ranging from twenty to forty thousand dollars, plus a stock bonus of five to ten per cent of the total shares at capitalization, according to how shrewd a bargain Nelson had been able to drive. Glen noticed that these bonds all ran to Nelson personally instead of to the Desert Exploration Company, but comprehended quickly that this was one of those details in which he and the vice-president had covenanted to act independently.

"And here," said Nelson, finding another document in his pocket and tossing it over, "—Dorothy Bennett, two claims."

The financial agent took up the option signed by Dorothy Bennett. Dorothy! That was rather a nice name. Then it suddenly occurred to Glen that this must be the divorcée who had tried to see him this morning, and he had it fixed in his mind that that person was a coarse, designing woman. He frowned at thought of her—frowned and chuckled to think she had cornered Nelson and wheedled or strong-armed him into doing business with her. But when he had read the terms of the option, he chuckled from the other corner of his mouth.

"You shaved it pretty close with the woman," he laughed, ob-



"Encouraging—all encouraging!" crowed Nelson. "Now let's have a look at the property."

serving last of all that no stock bonus was promised, a feature practically always included because it cost nothing if the claim was a failure and gave the original owner additional recompense if it proved a money-maker.

"Oh," sneered Nelson, "she didn't know any better. Wanted a small amount of cash now, rather than a larger sum later. I could have bought her claims outright for two thousand, but any time I put down two thousand cash on property without knowing what's in the ground, you can chalk it up on the call-board. I gave her a couple of hundred dollars and took the option at four thousand just because it looks by the map as if she might be in good territory. By the way, Glen, you'll have time after lunch to run out and look her ground over and get back before I leave. I'd like to know how it shapes up to you."

"Very well, sir," responded the young man without the slightest hesitation. He was utterly hard now—hardened by an eye upon his own glittering prospect and hardened by his worshipful admiration for this black-whiskered demigod of finance, Augustus Parker Nelson.

"The fool!" he muttered as after luncheon he rode desertward alone in his car. "The fool! What did she want to get into Nelson's clutches for? It served her right for sticking her finger in a man's game."

AFTER twenty minutes upon the dusty road Glen's car veered off along a faint trail, wheels crackling and rustling over the stunted sage-brush and sand-and-gravel-crust of centuries, up a tiny cañon till its bottom pinched out entirely and a gaunt yellow ridge lifted itself above the young man's peering face. Abandoning his car, he climbed this ridge on foot, and then making his perilous way along a summit of crumbling rocks, he stood at last upon a sort of prow thrusting itself out into a vast swimming atmosphere with the desert floor beneath, and beyond, snowy mountains stabbing the sky.

Glen knew that these snow-reefs swimming in the distant blue were one hundred and forty miles away in California, but he did not know that in a cleft of those same mountains, well below the snow line, amid a cathedral group of giant redwoods, the summer lodge of the desolate and irascible old Simon Cuttybone was pitched, and that there the old man fought against his memories and his maladies for peace of mind and surcease of pain. Ignorant of this, Glen speculated upon the panorama until the faint, far-off sound of a hammer ringing upon a drill-head recalled his mind to thoughts of earth, and, rousing himself, he started on.

He picked his way in the direction of the sound until, rounding a small reef of weathered outcrop, he came upon an old man's back that rose and fell with the swinging of a sledge. And crouching before the aged toiler was a figure in brown denim, with slim, gloved hands that were nevertheless strong, for after every blow of the sledge they lifted the drill and turned it so that its blade, driven an eighth of an inch into the rock at each stroke, might cross the last cut with the next.

His advent unnoticed, so intent were they upon their work, Glen paused and reflected upon the scene, all of it—a picture that began with cloud and snow line and stretched down to the pathetic little tin shack and the two figures moving with the regularity of automatons in the foreground.

"Good afternoon!" announced Glen cheerfully—thoughtlessly; for if he had been a miner bred, he would not have called out suddenly like that where one man is swinging a sledge and another person is holding the drill.

Startled by this sudden unfamiliar voice, the old man's body swayed ever so slightly while his eyes, lifted for a moment to note the strange presence, returned quickly to guide the descending sledge in its course. But too late. The blow glanced from the drill-head. With a suppressed scream of pain the drill-holder leaped up and snatched off a glove. Blood streamed from her fingers.

For a moment Glen was halted through realizing that it was the figure of a woman here before him—a spare figure, yet not without its curves, a fact which even the loose-fitting male garments failed altogether to obscure.

"You dod-burned fool!" exclaimed the old man, turning a blazing eye on Glen.

"I am, all right," acknowledged Glen; and recovering control of his faculties he strode forward. "Allow me!" he said. "It was awfully stupid of me to startle you that way. Awfully! I can never forgive myself. Never!" Before the girl could resist, he had taken the wrist of the injured hand in his and stood studying the wound intently.

"Nothing broken!" announced the girl, wriggling her finger. "Only the skin! The glove saved me—the glove and good old Jack turning the sledge wide when he saw it was going to miss."

Old Jack stood trembling, the great hammer still in his hand, an expression of terror and self-reproach upon his face.

"There—there! You couldn't help it," the girl soothed, and with her uninjured hand gave the old man a quick double tap on the shoulder. "Excuse me a moment," she said, turning toward the cabin.

Glen exchanged a significant glance with the whiskered miner. "Nerve!" breathed the old man in tones of fervent admiration. "She aint nothing but nerve, that girl!"

The young woman reappeared in the cabin doorway, with a bundle of torn linen and a bottle of iodine in her hand. "Here, pour on the water, if you will, please," she said.

From a canteen Glen poured a laving stream. "Now the iodine," directed the girl, and herself opened the wounds to the yellow liquid, twisting and grimacing under the sting.

Glen groaned in sympathy, but the girl only laughed at him. The two of them wove the bandage in and around the damaged fingers.

"There, now, tie it!" she demanded. Glen, embarrassed and bungling, split the end of the bandage and clumsily tied it about a wrist that while brown was still soft and full of a kind of electric warmth.

"Quite gory!" she laughed, lifting the hand with its white mittens through which the welling blood still showed in crimson spots.

"I'm so sorry—so ashamed of myself!" protested the mortified young man.

"Pray don't be!" she pleaded. "It might have happened, anyway. It has occurred before with not so good an excuse. You see,"—and her voice was considerably lowered to a confidential whisper that for some reason Glen found especially charming—"old Jack is kind of trembly at times. Look here!" And she called his attention to a freshly healed scar on her right hand.

"Miss—" began Glen, with a glow of admiration in his tones. "Mrs.," corrected the young woman, with just the slightest tone of wistfulness in her voice,—"Mrs. Dorothy Bennett."

A disembodied bolt of some kind passed through Glen from head to heel and left him feeling weak and—soft. Married? This girl, with the flush of girlhood still upon her cheeks! Yes. Some blow had fallen—for matrimony, he understood, had been to her a blow. There was a hurt look about the sensitive mouth that a moment ago had been so straight and firm with resolution as she fought her woman's disposition to faint at blood and pain; and there were in the appealing depths of those brown agate eyes traces of childish wonder at some cruel wound the soul behind them had suffered. But the features as a whole were still those of youth.

"My name is McWilliams, Glen McWilliams, Financial Agent of the Desert Exploration Company," the young man announced, extending his hand.

"I know," said the girl, taking the hand with an apologetic laugh. "I went in to see you this morning, but couldn't because you were engaged with the vice-president of the company. Later I bonded my property to Mr. Nelson himself, and oh, I felt so relieved, just to turn myself over to your company, because everyone gives you such a fine reputation. I didn't care at all what they wrote in the paper I signed. Everyone always says the D. E. Co. will do right by you because Mr. McWilliams is such a fine young man." She smiled a wondrous smile. Glen knew, from the moment of that smile, that whatever unhappiness might have overtaken her, in matrimony or out of it, that she herself was blameless, and he felt himself henceforth her sworn advocate.

"It must be glorious," the girl went on, "to have the whole community think of you and of your company like that."

GLEN flushed. A sense of utter baseness pervaded his own soul, together with an impulse to turn and fly to Nelson, and when he found him, to slay him. Instead, however, he held his ground and took up the conversation exactly where the girl—he couldn't think of her as a woman—had laid it down.

"Yes," he said, "I came out at Mr. Nelson's request to look over the property, and as soon as you feel comfortable—feel that you can spare me, that is—why, the old man will show me your workings."

"Oh, but I'm going to show you myself after I have had a cup of tea. I'll feel stronger then. You'll have one with me, wont you? Do!"

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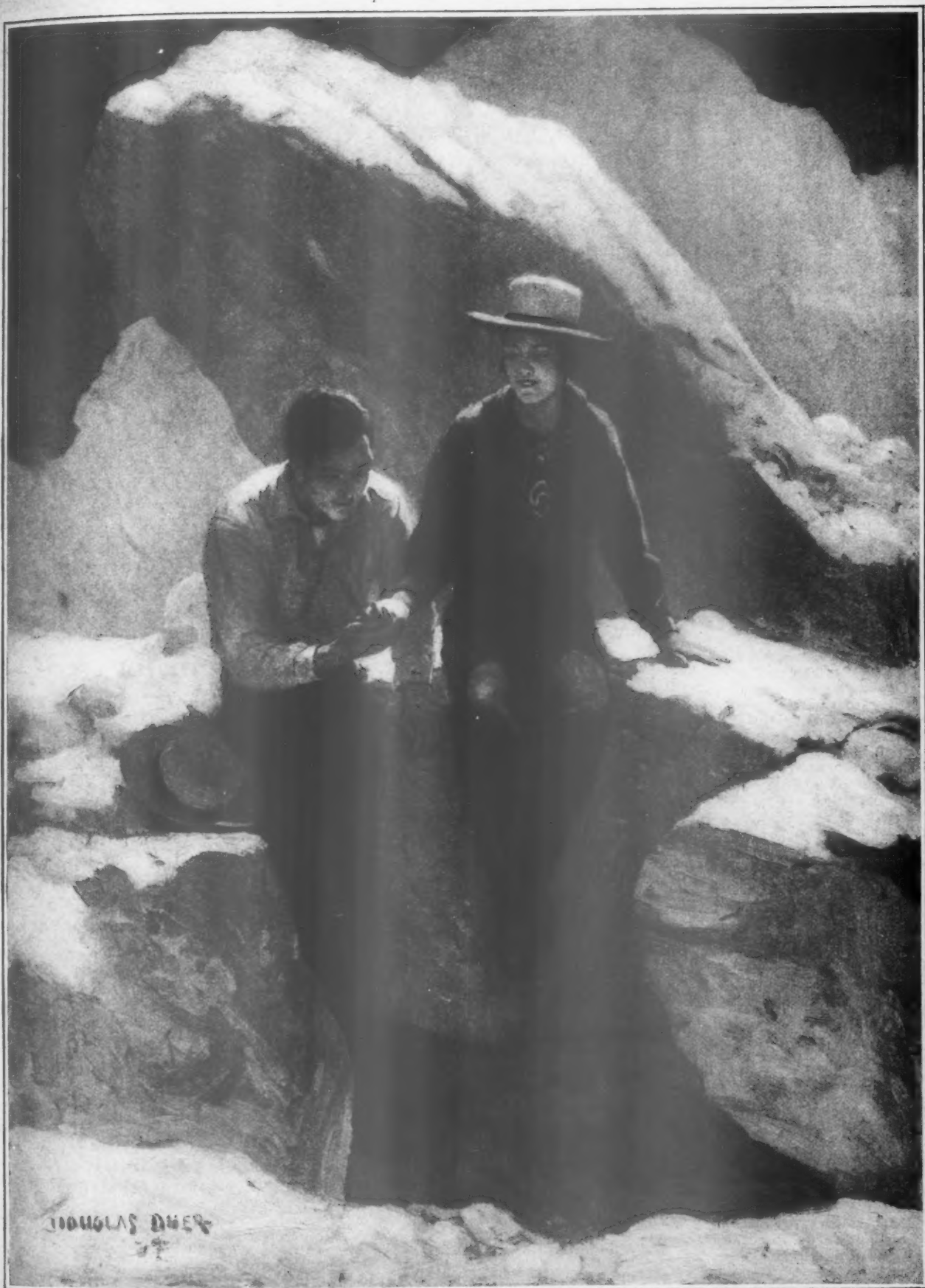
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"I'm so sorry—so ashamed of myself!" protested the mortified young man. "Pray don't be," she pleaded. "It might have happened anyway."

Tea? A cup of tea with one who was most obviously a refined and gently bred woman, in such a spot! A cup of tea before inspecting a prospect upon which little more than the assessment work had been done?

The young woman waved him to a seat at the tiny table in her cabin, along one side of which a folding cot was stretched, opposite a tiny stove.

"Old Jack sleeps yonder under the overhang," she explained. "He does his cooking on my stove and mostly does mine at the same time. Jack's a wizard at biscuit."

Glen, forgetting business, and unaware heretofore that there could be such artistry in the brewing of a cup of tea, settled himself comfortably to watch this khaki doll, with one white-wrapped hand, flit about her little tin doll-house.

"I'd think you were a boy scout, if you didn't turn round," he laughed, as she stood on tiptoe, reaching up for a pot of jam.

"Would you?" she laughed, swinging about with a smile in her eyes and with a coil or two of fluffy brown hair breaking down from under the wide hat.

"Mrs.! Say! I just can't call you Mrs.," he confided over the tea.

"Have to—till I get that decree," she replied simply, her face growing sober. "In a little community like a new mining district, everybody knows everybody's else business, and so I suppose you know what I am in Nevada for—primarily."

Her tone steadied Glen at the same time that it increased his sympathy and respect. It reminded him, too, that for a hard-boiled egg of a business man, he was in danger of becoming mellow. He checked himself up sharply. Once outside, too, and going over the property, the professional instinct reasserted itself more strongly. Yet things kept happening to divert his mind from business. As he gave a hand to help her up the steep slope of the hill, her clasp revealed rough calluses in her palm. It was much harder than his; and she, quick, sensitive and deliciously frank, knew that he had noticed.

"They have bunions on them, almost," she laughed, with a nod toward the drill and the sledge standing beside it. "Poverty makes toilers of all—poverty, coupled with pride."

"And you can laugh at this hardship," he inquired, "when it is so obvious that your rearing has been soft?"

"It is better to laugh at the hardships, I've found," she replied with a momentary shadow of unpleasant memory in her eyes.

"But it's all wrong, you know, a thoroughbred like you," he protested, "having to endure—"

Again the dark eyes kindled with the light of a smile about to break, and she interrupted him with:

"A thoroughbred? You are very kind. Besides," she intimated, "if one were a thoroughbred, one would—would take it something like this, don't you think?" And she waved her hand at the tiny corrugated iron shack and the general barrenness of the site.

"You bet!" declared Glen with emphasis. The girl, abandoning conversation then, led him from one prospect-hole to another.

Glen clambered down into each, inspected the bottom, took up specimens, chipped off others

from the sides and examined all with the greatest show of interest. While he did so, the girl drew forth a report from the pocket of her flannel shirt and read him the figures of the assayers; but the young man's attitude was for a long time that of suspended judgment.

They came at length to the last hole of all and stood upon its edge with Glen pausing to survey with increasing approval the whole sweep of the property.

"On the surface showing here," she announced, and began to read the slips. "two dollars and twenty cents; six feet down, three dollars and eighty cents; twelve feet down, seven dollars; at eighteen feet, sample across face shows twelve dollars."

"Indeed?" exclaimed Glen, with a rising inflection which betokened a deepening respect.

They clambered down and stood together in the bottom of this sloping shaft, very close together naturally, for the dimensions of the shaft compelled it. Glen's eyes were at first intent upon the rocky walls, reading avidly the stories their eccentric weavings told him; but finally consciousness of her overcame all other consciousness.

His glance, however, was still upon the bit of chipped-off rock. He had wet it with his tongue and stood watching intently for the appearance of bright specks glistening in the moisture. But inevitably his eyes were lifted from the specimen and met hers only ten inches distant, studying not the rock but his features absorbedly as if it were in his verdict that all her hopes were centered. It seemed to him, all at once, as if the entire world had separated itself from them, and here they were together and alone in this ragged hole.

"What are your plans?" he asked, pulling himself together.

It was a startling question, but there was no mistaking the friendliness of the voice that propounded it. Yet the woman parried. It was a question that went into her past as well as into her present and her future.

"Oh," she replied, and for the first time there was a note of pessimism in the tones, "I have no plans—only hopes."

"You may well have hopes. I should say," the young man declared, examining the rock this time through a small pocket lens.

"You think—" she began eagerly, and then choked up with a sudden lump in the throat—"you think the prospect is good?" she finally concluded in a flatly normal tone.

"I think it is good," he answered, speaking quickly. "I think you have a mine here—undoubtedly you have."

"Oh!" she murmured, with a little gesture of ecstasy. "It means everything—independence, fortune, everything—to hear that." And then, as if she thought he did not comprehend—and she wished him to—she went on plaintively: "Could you understand what it is to be fighting great wealth? Great wealth! They offer me wealth for—for me! But I will not be sold for wealth—without love, without happiness."

For a moment the financial agent visioned this pathetic little figure battling for herself against some vast, unscrupulous material power that sought to hold her when the only bonds that should ever bind a creature like this were hopelessly broken.

"There are those," she admitted naïvely, "to whom I might appeal, who also have great power, but they have been very hard with me, and very unfair. I will not ask them. I got myself in, and I will get myself out. Besides, Mr. McWilliams, my cause is just. You can believe that, can you not?" Again there was gentle pleading in her tones.

"I am convinced it is," Glen declared fervently, and found himself for a moment mysteriously possessed of her hand. She withdrew the hand and continued:

"Only a few thousand dollars will enable me to fight my oppressors successfully, and I know (Continued on page 136)



The old man's eyes returned quickly to guide the descending sledge. But too late!

APRIL FOOL CANDY

By HENRY C. ROWLAND

Illustrated by
MAURICE L. BOWER

NO sir, I don't offer the least excuse for what I did. It was about as unlawful as anything could possibly be. It was abduction, kidnapping, forcible detention, piracy, worth twenty years at least, and the softest-hearted twelve good men and true would have found a verdict of guilty without leaving their seats. After one look at Maisie they would have rendered said verdict with a strong recommendation for hanging. The chances are they wouldn't have blamed the prisoner, but they would have figured that even after being hanged by the neck until he was dead, he would be quitting a winner.

Maybe you've read about these wild Hungarian noblemen that offer some dancer an ancestral castle and estates for a kiss, then take a dive off the ramparts into the ravine below? Well, Maisie Meadows was the sort of girl to make a hot-headed guy do that sort of thing. She began to start internecine warfare in the school district when she was about ten, and it kept getting worse and worse, so that when she was sixteen, whenever you saw a young chap with two black eyes or a puffed lip, you could make a safe bet that he was a beau of Maisie's.

It was about this time that I bought a stack in the game. I was skipper of a Sound coaster, Puget Sound, you know, and for some time I had traded with Maisie's father, who was a Portugese ship-chandler with a good little business. He was a fine-looking, middle-aged man who had married a beautiful Swedish girl, the daughter of a fruit rancher; and Maisie was the result. Maisie's mother had died when her daughter was a baby; but from the time Maisie started school, her dad had kept her insulated like the live wire that she was. He was a foresighted man, with about as much confidence in the chivalry of young American manhood as I've got in the prohibition principles of a Siwash Indian, and the result was that none of the boys got a real close-up of Maisie until she left the convent and took her seat at the cashier's desk in the store. Even then it was like looking at the money just inside the paying teller's window, and in her hours off, she was trailed by a maiden aunt who looked exactly like a cormorant.

The old man had always liked me, and no



The fact that she'd had a way of setting her boy beaux to slugging and gouging never seemed to be against her.

doubt he was beginning to feel the strain of Maisie; so when I showed him that I had been offered the billet of assistant superintendent of our shipping company, with a good salary and a prospect of being taken into the firm, he invited me up to the house. The cormorant approved likewise, and when I began to call, she would take her knitting into the next room, with the door between wide open, of course. Maisie liked me too, and she was deadly sick of her cold storage; so, being a two-fisted young fellow and standing watch-and-watch with the cormorant, I was beginning to flivver around the place looking over bungalows, when Maisie went down to Pasadena to visit her mother's folks; and there Cox, the big Golden West Film Company producer, caught sight of her on the beach, and blew out a cylinder head. He came along with an offer that scared even the cormorant, though the old girl got her second wind and shoved it up another fifty per cent.

COX was willing to go it blind on Maisie's possible talent. No doubt he figured that even if she were dead but perfectly embalmed, she was worth twice the money he had offered. Any sign of life and human intelligence she might develop under his training would be velvet. And Maisie had quite a lot of both. But for downright loveliness—well, sir, you've seen her pictures, and the most nerve-racking part of her doesn't show in them. That was her coloring. She is one of these tawny blondes with hair like the mane of a lion in the sun and just as thick, and amber-colored eyes with long black lashes. I've heard they had to carry out the lads that played the leading rôles with her—even hard old wagons that had been hitched to stars for years before the movies were dreamed of.

So here was where I got my opportunity. Right at the beginning I couldn't blame Maisie very much, because she was too rattled to get an observation. But the old man and the cormorant gave me the double-cross. It didn't matter a hiccup in a gale of wind that we were formally betrothed or that I was a steady young chap with a fine job for my age and would cheerfully have been keelhaunched to save her from pricking her finger. It counted about a bucket of slush that I had lost a cold million dollars by getting myself engaged to marry her. A pal of mine and I were just about to pool our savings and close for the purchase of a claim in the Goldfields region when Maisie, after filling and backing for about six months, agreed to marry me. He got another partner and they struck it rich almost from the start.

No sir, I got my sailing orders. Then the country went to war, and I was in the recruiting office before the captain uncorked his ink-bottle. "One" was my number—easy to remember. Navy? No sir. I was in a hurry to kill somebody and then get killed. I managed the first, but not the last, because I was sent home all shot up and gassed up and eaten up, and with the advice of the surgeon to get cured up and then get married up. Here again I managed the first after a fashion.

Meanwhile Maisie had been causing more national unrest than the war, among all the male population but the totally blind, because it made no difference whether or not it was of military age and fitness. From her pictures it was plain she had developed a lot of talent for strangle-holds and getting into limousines and stepping out of them and handing sables to a maid and looking into a three-ply looking-glass and wearing clothes more or less, while she was nothing short of a genius in working her lachrymal ducts. All of her parts were pure, and she was most popular in the kid rôles of a little girl with grown-up legs. Never any stork or vamp acts. For one thing, she was too young; and for another, the cormorant wouldn't have stood for it.

BOTH the cormorant and Papa were in the game. The cormorant played just what she was, and I guess they toned her down instead of making her up. Dad had sold his ship-chandler business, or given it to the Chink who swept out the store, and was hauling down his hundreds or thousands as "the distinguished foreigner," and looked the part. Maisie had a little house like the one the President lives in, but more modern, and an acre or two of stables and garage.

Now, you might think, sir, that all this was enough to cure me of my trouble, especially as I was shy two ribs, a piece of lung and wore an artificial knee-cap. But somehow it only seemed to make it worse. My name is Henry Morgan, and I must have had an ancestor who went by the same and used to profiteer in and about the Spanish Main, his home office being for some time at Kingston, Jamaica. Some years ago there were a series of magazine articles about this sea-going Bolshevik, and the illustrations for them looked exactly like a passport photo I

had taken the other day, and the way I'm apt to look about years from now. I've decided that this Sir Henry Morgan certainly have been my forbear.

No sir, I can't say that I felt as if Maisie had risen above me. I had the nerve to consider a doughboy promoted first sergeant on No Man's Land every bit as good as a storekeeper's daughter promoted from beach beauty to ten dollar one on Mr. Cox's lot. The only difference in my life for Maisie was that before I went away I loved her and now I only wanted her. And let me tell you, sir, some difference.

What made it worse, perhaps, was that an old uncle of mine the lumber business had died and left me quite a lump of money being pleased because I'd been in such a rush to enlist, I really didn't have to work, and all I did was to hang around Cox barracks and generally haunt Maisie's location like a wretched ghost. Maisie let me see her pretty often, because there been no actual fight between us, but she served it to me that I was wasting my time.

Well, sir, it got so bad at last that I held a council of war on myself and said: "Henry, you've got to take your choice between dying here of unrequited love or cashing in somewhere else some quicker and more manly poison." So I looked up a map for the nearest Trouble Reservation, and here was Maisie as nice and handy as any ambitious suicide could wish. They struck me that it might be a good plan to combine business and pleasure. I'd been up into the Gulf of California several times and had always thought it might be fun to prospect around a bit on the Peninsula; so I bought a fifty-foot seagoing motorboat and fitted her out. My object was to cure myself of Maisie. It wasn't working just then, having got herself tied up in some sort of litigation which was apt to keep her horn-locked with Cox for the next six months. There was also rather more than rumor that this might be settled almost any day by her marrying the low-lived bandit. At least, that was how he looked to me.

MY boat was comfortable enough, and I hadn't started myself in the matter of supplies. I had shipped a scrub crew; two Mazatlan mongrels who didn't speak any known language, and a Chink; but I'd been living aboard a few days and they seemed good enough workers. And then when I was all ready to sail, I saw Maisie's last picture, which they were trying out in Los Angeles and my nerve went back on me. Meaning as she had treated me, I couldn't leave the place that she had fested.

Well, this celluloid spasm was desert-island, shipwreck stuff. The villain-hero person kidnaps Maisie aboard his yacht, then mistakes some uncharted continent for the back of a whale which he thinks it would be fun to ram, and they get piled up. The crew grab the only small boat carried by this hundred-ton floating palace, and crazed with coca-fruit juice, they row straight out to sea. The villain pockets a couple of window-weights, and grabbing Maisie in his arms, jumps overboard and sinks to bottom—and holding his breath, walks uphill to the beach.

This part was punk, like most nautical movie stuff, but what followed put the finishing touches on me. Maisie, in all sorts of close combinations with this fat-faced fool, spearing fish on the beach and climbing trees to set bird-snares and scaling the cliffs and building their house and the like of that, just the two of them, all other hands having got drowned or something.

I'm one of those far-sighted fans that always sit as far back as they can get, which is the easiest on your eyes if they are good enough to get the details, and now I'd slipped into a last-row seat against the parapet and next but one to the aisle—then occupied by a woman in a shawl like girls wear to dances, and a big hat with a floppy brim. The picture had been running about ten minutes when I went in, and the place was darker than usual; and as I'd got out of the habit of looking at women around me, it was not until the end of the piece and the lights went on that I discovered it was Maisie. She had stolen off by herself, not so much to study the picture as to watch the effect of it on that audience.

"What d'you think of it, Henry?" she asked, holding her head down so as not to be recognized by the people going out. Like me she got there a little late, and missed the beginning.

"They are the prettiest pictures of you I ever saw," I answered. "Is that all?" she asked.

I knew she wanted me to say something nice about her acting, so I did. Maybe she was looking for more, because she said: "Cox didn't give me a fair show. He seems to think that all I need to do is to flop around half dressed."

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He waited on her like a slave, and she treated him rough until the very end, when they got rescued.

"That guy you played with sure hates himself," I remarked. "Every chance he gets, he tries to crawl into the camera. I wouldn't have stood for it, if I'd been you."

"You said it, Henry. That's one reason I'm breaking my contract. My last three pictures feature me about like the sun gets featured during an eclipse. I don't have to stand for it, and I won't. Here's where I take a much-needed rest."

"Well, I guess you can afford it, Maisie," I said. "You're only twenty-one, and if I know anything about your aunt and your dad, I guess you can go on strike for a while without suffering actual want. You better marry me and take a trip round the world or out to Japan or something."

"I can see the finish of my art if I was to marry you, Henry," says she. "You might as well get it through your head first as last that there's nothing doing. My duty is to give high-class screen productions to the public."

"Well," I answered, "of course it aint for me to criticize the up-lifting effect of a picture like that, Maisie. But it seems to me that if I was the average married man, it would make me sort of discontented with home life."

"That aint my fault," Maisie snapped. "I can't help how I was made."

"Do you think the stuff is true to life?" I asked.

"Of course not," Maisie answered.

"It's just the fool author's idea.

Or maybe it's just to please the fans. If a man and a woman were cooped up like that in some god-forsaken place, they'd hate each other like poison in no time. It would be the same as if he took her to live in a nester's cabin. The man might like it for a while, but the woman would go crazy."

"But s'pose he loved her nearly to death?" I said. "What if he found he just couldn't live without her?"

Maisie gave her head a toss. "Well, if he felt as bad as that, I guess the best thing that lovesick guy could do would be to kidnap her and take her to some such hole," says she. "He'd soon get cured without paying any doctor's bills. Say, what's this I hear about your buying a yacht?"

"Oh, I bought a snug little cruiser to knock around on," I answered. "I'd like for you to come out and take a look at her."

The place was darkened at that moment, and they started a kid piece. Maisie yawned. "I'm going," says she. "Kid stuff makes me sick. You can say what you like about my pictures, old dear, but how about this squalling-baby, barefoot-boy bunk to make the average fan think twice before committing premeditated matrimony? The washtub and the kitchen sink and darning basket—good night!"

She got up, and so did I; and we went out, nobody paying any particular attention to Maisie, for movie stars are no particular treat to the Los Angeles common people.

Maisie had driven herself down from her hundred-thousand-dollar hovel, and her runabout was parked

outside. I'd seen her out of sorts before, "temperamental" mouthful they call it in the profession; but tonight she was crosser than the spars of a square-rigger. I can't honestly say that I was loving her, but the core of me seemed to be on fire, and the outside like ice. The truth of the matter is she was hating her for a beautiful lump of selfishness and I seemed to remember all at once how as a little girl she had driven decent fellows who had always been good friends to me each other up and looked on, smiling, and how she had kept in a ferment for months and then promised to marry me, doubt, because she decided I was about the best chance in and then had kept me from throwing in with my pal and closing up a fortune; and when I came back from the war badly hurt but still sound, she had broken her promise and turned me cold because she no longer needed me and was so stuck on her that she thought I wasn't anything like good enough.

All I'd been through at the front— But there, I said I was going to make any excuses, and I won't. But as I walked out of that theater with my hand cuddling Maisie's soft round cheek, a crazy, ferocious plan was driven into my brain and stuck like a spike.

What difference did it make, anyhow?

What was going to lay off for a few months and I didn't care three whoops what happened to me. Nobody could know what she had gone. Trust the corner to hand out some plausible yarn.

I didn't intend to do her any harm. I meant that she should act out in real life what I had just been watching in that picture.

The fellow there had done her any harm. He had waited on her like a slave, and she had treated him rough until the end, when they had rescued by the British gun boat. The rather than see him hanged for a picture she had said she was with him of her accord, and would by finding she was love with him.

I can't say I was crazy enough to do for anything like that. It flashed through my head that maybe she was right in saying that the man would soon be cured. That alone would be worth the doing; but meanwhile could satisfy that hunger to have her close, all myself, and not be everlastingly tortured by the thought of her being hugged and kissed and hauled about by other fellows.

And Maisie played right into my hands. It was early in the evening and she seemed restless and not wanting to go home. The night was a lovely one, with a full moon and a light offshore breeze. Maisie turned to me and said, "Let's go for a spin along the shore."

"What's the matter with going in my boat?" The suggestion seemed to strike her on the spot. "Where I'd fast, but I just wait." "Hurry." "Maybe to kidnap." Maisie. "We were grinning." "took all had really snarl in." "Hello." "said. E. Henry I." "M. South So." "She s." "at me v." "says she." "the bett." "when w." "All." "need, o." "Maisie." "may th." "close, a." "her do." "our pla." "We go." "wheel," "at a m." "Wel." "Maisie." "thing." "of tric." "do an." "naped." "might." "differ." "It." "comf." "had b." "seem." "how." "as sv." "a na." "to h." "of a." "me a." "B." "to h." "thre." "it f." "tim." "ful." "the." "wor." "hen." "her." "voi." "bel."



"You better marry me and take a trip around the world or to Japan or something."

"What's the matter with going in my boat?" The suggestion seemed to strike her on the spot.

to strike her just right. She liked boating and was used to going on the water. We got into the car and drove down to the landing where I'd tied up my motor-dinghy. My brain was working pretty fast, but I was cold as ice. I helped her into the dinghy, then said: "Just wait a second. I got to get a couple more cans of gas."

"Hurry up," says she. "I can't be gone over an hour."

"Maybe you better call up the house and tell them I'm going to kidnap you," I said.

Maisie laughed. "All right," says she. "They need a jolt for the way they've been nagging me to marry Cox."

We went back up to the boathouse, and I listened to her message with a sort of unholy grin. The boatman and a boy were grinning too. They had recognized Maisie, of course, and took all she said as kidding. But it was plain to me that there had really been a rumpus, because I could hear the old man's snarl in the receiver.

"Hello, Dad," says Maisie. "The picture is rotten, just as I said. Everybody's knocking it. No, I'm not coming home. Henry Morgan is going to kidnap me sure 'nough. . . . Yes. . . . Maybe you'll do as I say next time. We're starting for the South Sea Islands. . . . What's that?"

She stamped her foot and hung up the receiver, then looked at me with a blaze in her tawny eyes. "They make me sick," says she. "The sooner they get over the idea that I'm still a kid, the better it will be for all hands. Come on, Henry. I don't care when we come back."

"All right," I answered, and paid for the gas, which I didn't need, of course, as I was full up with all the boat could carry. Maisie went down the gangway, and I said to the boatman: "You may think this is a joke, but it aint. They've crowded her too close, and she's going to put one over on 'em. I'm going to set her down on Santa Rosa and go on to Frisco—unless we change our plans." And I gave him a wink and went down after Maisie. We got into the dinghy, and I wrung the neck of the little fly wheel, and we started off to where my boat, the *Tuna*, was lying at a mooring.

Well, sir, you may think I was chuckling to myself at the way Maisie had been dealing me all the trumps, but I wasn't any such thing. Not that my nerve was going back on me or I felt ashamed of tricking her as I had, or was dreading what she was bound to do and say when she found out that she was sure enough kidnaped; nor was I worried about her reputation and how it might affect her professionally. No sir, it was something quite different.

It may sound foolish, but I was beginning to have the uncomfortable feeling that I'd grabbed off a strange girl. Maisie had broken her promise to me and turned me down cold without seeming to mind it any or have the least compunction about how badly I might be broken up; but she had done it all just as sweet as cream, with never a mean or angry word, as if it was a natural thing to do, and as if it never for a moment occurred to her that it was different from what could have been expected of a girl. It had been this as much as anything that had driven me so crazy.

But this night, for the first time since I'd known her, I seemed to have a different slant on her character. She had given me three distinct jolts: first, her spite at the leading man I'd taken it for granted she must be in love with, and her jealousy every time he crawled up to the camera alone; second, at the scornful way she spoke about children, especially poor people and their kids; and third, at the way she'd jumped at the chance of worrying her father. The Lord knows I had little reason to love her old man, but at least he'd always been kind and devoted to her and given her the best he had. There'd been a cut in Maisie's voice when she was talking to him over the phone I'd never heard before, and it set me thinking.

YOU see, I'd never seen anything deeper than the sugar-coating of Maisie, and had taken it for granted that she was solid sweetness clear through. The fact that from childhood she'd had a way of setting her boy beaux to slugging and gouging and yanking each other's hair never seemed to be anything against her. She never mixed up in a scrap herself. And in her own child pictures, which she did entirely at first, she was never short of downright angelic. She must have made the kids in the audience look to themselves like scaly little alligators.

And all that I'd seen of her during our courting was just the same. She was always smooth and sweet as honey, with me and everybody else that happened to be around, even the cormorant. She was sort of concentrated essence of saccharine with her dad, and would sit on his knee and stroke his beard and

could work him for any mortal thing she wanted. She could work anybody for what she wanted, and I'd have sworn that this disregard for others was unconscious.

It wasn't this part of her that had been my trouble, though, and as I helped her aboard the *Tuna* in the bright blaze of moonlight, I could guess something of the way the old-timers felt when they stole a beautiful girl and sailed away with her. Maisie was as much in my power as the girl it tells about in "Hereward the Wake," or "The Skeleton in Armor" or any of those tales. Seeing that she had told him herself over the phone that she was going off with me, her father would scarcely be sending any subchasers or planes from the Cox airdrome to look for us. He would think that she was just trying to give him a scare, and wait around the phone to hear from her next. And to my Chink and two Guatemala boys, stealing a girl looked like about as much of a crime, and as apt to be punished, as stealing an American tourist looked to a Mexican bandit.

MAISIE was well pleased with my cruiser, especially the cabin accommodations which were roomy and well arranged. "There are your quarters," I said, showing her the owner's cabin, and she laughed. We went on deck, and I cast off the mooring and got the boat under way. One of the boys took the wheel, and I swung a hammock from the stanchions of the cockpit awning, and Maisie and I sat in that. I slipped my arm around her waist and she let it stay there, clasping my hand in hers, just as she used to do when we were engaged. The boat was heading straight out over a smooth, bright sea that looked more gold than silver in the mellow moonlight.

"Well, sweetie," I said, "here you are sure enough kidnapped."

"How much is the ransom?" Maisie asked.

"You're the ransom," I answered. "Payable in advance. You can't come back until you marry me. We can duck into some little port on Lower California and get a padre to splice us up."

She thought I was kidding, of course, and then I got the shock of my life, for she snuggled a little closer and answered:

"Well, do you know, Henry, I've been thinking lately that I might do a lot worse than marry you, after all. When a girl is playing juveniles, she draws better if she's single, but I got no use for kids or kid parts."

"Then it wasn't natural?" I asked.

"Of course, it wasn't. I found it got me what I wanted, so I worked it for all it was worth. Now I'm grown up and making big money, I don't need it. Dad and Auntie are always butting in, and if I was married to you, I could do what I like. You're not the man to interfere with his wife's career." She snuggled a little closer, but somehow my arm seemed to have got sort of limp. "You wouldn't be jealous, and you're steady and easy-going, and it would be mighty restful to come back to you after getting mauled around by these fool beauty-men."

"It might not be so restful as you seem to think," I said. Maisie laughed and gave my hand a little squeeze and a pat, as if it was the head of old dog Tray.

"I'll say it would," she answered. "Besides, you're a good business man, Dad says, and you could look after my contracts and accounts and run the house and 'tend to things generally while I was off on location."

"And hire the help and wheel out the kid—" I began, but she gave a little scream.

"Gee, Henry," she cried, "are you trying to make me lose my nerve? I don't so much mind the idea of a husband, but if you get talking about kids, it's all off. That would just about can my career."

"Other stars seem to manage it, all right," I said.

"Well," says Maisie, "if they like that sort of bourgeois stuff, they can have it. I've got my eye on something bigger. You can always divorce a husband if it doesn't work out all right, but you can't very well divorce a kid. It hurts an artist with the fans."

"I guess you're right, my dear," I said, and could feel my arm getting sort of paralyzed. "After all, it's the fans that count with a girl like you."

"Of course," says she. "I knew you would be sensible about it. I'd like to get married and have my own private life, but my art comes first. It would help me a lot to marry Cox, of course, but he's getting on. If I was to marry some star, he'd be jealous of my success. I want a husband that would be proud of it."

"How about your being proud of him?" I asked.

She gave my hand a little squeeze. "Well, what's to prevent that too, dearie?" she asked. "You're big and strong and sort of distinguished-looking in a Puritan (Continued on page 154)

KERRIGAN'S KID

By
GERALD BEAUMONT

Illustrated by
J. J. GOULD



"Toolie-woolie," he whispered.
"The old Oofy-goof!"

FROM a bedroom window that overlooked the St. Clair ball-park, a boy looked down intently through a pair of old-fashioned opera glasses.

Jimmy Kerrigan was a very little boy, and he took more than an ordinary interest in the uniformed figures far below him, skimming around like gray water-bugs on a big green pond. One glance under the bedclothes at the little leg encased in plaster of Paris from knee to hip, and you would have understood why Jimmy's area of entertainment was limited.

On Friday afternoons, when a section of the left-field bleachers, almost under his window, was filled with jubilant youngsters who had been admitted free, the boy liked to imagine that he was sitting in the very front row, where he had a fair chance to scramble for the balls occasionally batted into the inclosure.

One afternoon an almost unbelievable thing happened. A ball from the bat of Truck Darrow actually passed over the fence and hit not twenty feet below the boy's open window. In a frenzy of excitement, Jimmy Kerrigan stretched out one hand as far as he could, but the sudden movement disturbed the heavy weight affixed through a pulley to his left leg, and he dropped back upon his pillow, a little whiter than usual.

When the score-board opposite him showed that the Badgers had lost, he closed the window slowly and turned to his remaining diversion—a homemade scrapbook liberally adorned with newspaper illustrations, nearly all of the same individual, a big, heavy-shouldered man in a Badger uniform.

Underneath a picture, pasted in his book only that morning, Jimmy came upon a name with which he was perfectly familiar, but there was a two-word prefix that was new to him. He spelled out the letters, but they did not seem to make any sense. He was still puzzling over the problem when the door opened and the original of the picture entered the room. The boy's eyes brightened.

"H'lo, Dad!"

"Lo, Son!"

"We lost again today, didn't we? But they didn't hit you hard."
"Not very hard, Son. But that's the way the luck goes sometimes. One of these days it will change; it's got to! You keep quiet like the Doc' said!"

"Sure."

"That's good, Son. I've got some swell news for you. There's a big French doctor coming out here next month, a regular major-leaguer, and they tell me at the hospital that if anybody can fix up your leg, it's him. Now, aint that swell?"

Jimmy's eyes glistened. "And will I be able to play ball again? Will I?"

"Shouldn't wonder. But we got to get a few more games under our belt and pull down that bonus. Take just about a thousand dollars to put you on your feet again, I guess."

"Gee whiz! That's a lot of money, aint it?"

"Un-huh! Now lie quiet till I get supper."

The boy flattened out obediently. Then:

"Dad, what does 'toolie-woolie' mean?"

Down went the glass of water that Big Bill Kerrigan was carrying; its contents raced over the floor. He strode across the room and looked down at his son.

"Where'd you hear that?" he demanded.

The boy laid a small finger on the picture in the scrapbook. "See? It's right in front of your name." He spelled it out: "T-o-o-l-i-e-w-o-o-l-i-e."

Kerrigan snatched up the book and read the caption. Then he laid the volume down, forcing a laugh.

"That's just a name the boys gave me," he explained. "It don't mean anything. You see, I'm trying hard to win and— and things are not just breaking right."

The boy thought a moment. "I am little 'Toolie-woolie,'" he decided. "I am little Toolie-woolie Kerrigan; aint I, Dad?"

"Yes, Son," answered Bill, "you are little Toolie-woolie, sure enough."

NOW there are things beyond our philosophy and hence beyond our power to express in the terms of the dictionary. A man boasts that he has never met with an accident in his life, and the next day he is in bed with a broken leg, and he says: "I should have knocked on wood." Another man buys a famous jewel which has a tragic history, and when his wife is run down by an automobile, he says: "Of course, the thing is absurd." But he sells the jewel. The magician

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says: "Abracadabra!" or "Mumbo-jumbo!" and immediately a glass of water becomes a white rabbit.

Similarly the baseball fan, when he sees his favorite club suffer persistent misfortune, injury after injury, and finish in the basement year after year, despite all the money that is spent for new players and new managers, shakes his head and looks around for a Jonah to throw overboard. Thus it happens that every so often in some ball-park where the situation has taxed human comprehension, there is a certain day set apart for the burial of "Julius Jinx," and that mysterious personage, incased in a coffin, is carried to the home plate in the presence of a holiday throng and incinerated with befitting ceremonies.

This is purely a conceit of fandom and is not relished by the ball-players themselves. The men of the diamond do not like the word *jinx*; it has a sinister sound. They recognize, however, better than anyone else, that there is a factor in baseball which is often beyond their control. Ordinarily, it is referred to as "the breaks of the game," meaning the way the luck goes. But when this factor transcends the ordinary rules of chance and deliberately takes issue with a hard-working ball-club, there are always some men on a team who will cross their fingers in the seclusion of the clubhouse and whisper knowingly: "Toolie-woolie," or "Oofy-goo!"

After all, what else is there to say? Toolie-woolie Kerrigan was a whale of a pitcher, loose of muscle, long of arm, and with an easy movement that belied the speed which was his greatest asset.

Why the White Sox should have left him behind when they started East after a spring training-visit to California was a mystery to Coast League fans, the only possible explanation being that the Chicago club was so plentifully supplied with seasoned right-handers, that it became necessary to farm out even such promising talent as the big pitcher from Vancouver.

At all events, Kerrigan was left with the Badgers in exchange for Jimmy Thompson, a base-running phenomenon, and the big pitcher speedily became the main support of a club that for four years had finished in the basement.

For a year he was Big Bill Kerrigan, a silent, morose man, a good deal of a mystery to his own teammates, but an idol with the fans—a winning pitcher on a losing ball-club.

It was his second season with the Badgers, not long after he had demanded and obtained a contract calling for a thousand-dollar bonus if he won twenty games, that the sobriquet of Toolie-woolie appeared as a prefix to his name. It was whispered first in the clubhouse by Truck Darrow, the club's first-string catcher, and it had no reference then to any one man in particular; but as the season progressed and it became apparent that the Badgers, for one reason or another, could not hit behind the best pitcher on the circuit, the thing that was in the mind of every man in the Coast League narrowed down until it rested squarely on the broad shoulders of Toolie-woolie Kerrigan.

For all things there are plausible explanations. Had a psychologist, for example, been called into consultation his verdict no doubt would have been something like this:

"What has happened is very simple. You have a ball-club that finishes last, four times running, and starts the fifth season very badly. The fans arrange a Jinx Day, and between the time the

affair is planned and the day it is carried out, the team begins winning. But you have advertised the Jinx Day, and a large crowd is on hand; so you decide to go ahead. The program is poorly planned. The casket should have been of cardboard which would have burned quickly, and the band should have played more jazz and less dirges.

"You should have made the fans themselves carry the coffin instead of picking out ball-players like Strowbridge, Prentiss, McRae, Yates, Cluff and the other man. You selected the very men who were most likely to react to a gruesome suggestion.

"To make it worse, you got tired watching the thing burn, and you put it out with water, and the fool groundkeeper carted the unconsumed fragments of the casket out, leaving the skull and cross-bones facing the home club's bench.

"Don't you see what a stupid thing it all was? You visualized a thought before twenty thousand people and then burned the visualization, leaving the thought itself to germinate and eventually bear fruit. Now your club actually is jinxed."



"Bill," said the manager, "I'm sorry, but I've got to let you go."

But Big Bill Kerrigan was not a psychologist. He knew only what had occurred and not the underlying reason for it, and he was keenly, painfully aware that in the clubhouse the Badgers exchanged significant glances as, one after another, five ball-bearers who had figured in the mock funeral met with misfortune. *Kerrigan had been the sixth man.*

And because the *thing* admitted of argument, there was much talk, which is the worst thing possible for a ball-club.

Strowbridge, an outfielder from Little Rock, was the first to suffer. While playing his first game with the Badgers on Jinx Day, he ran into the fence head-on in the sixth inning, chasing a foul ball, and crumpled up with a broken collar-bone. He was carried off the field unconscious.

It was then that Truck Darrow, waiting until all the others had got into their street-clothes and left the clubhouse, approached Peewee Patterson and raised one huge paw with the middle digit flexed over a stubby forefinger.

"Toolie-woolie," he whispered. "The old Oofy-goof!"

"Forget it," admonished the little third-baseman. "The grounds were new to him, and he was trying to get off to a good start with the fans."

But Darrow shook his head. "There was a man on third," he reminded, "and only one out. If he'd caught the ball, the runner would have scored. Why should a man go after a ball like that?"

"Maybe he thought there were two gone."

It was a plausible explanation. Similarly, when the club released Prentiss and McRae, Sweeney pointed out that the Badgers never had had a pitcher from St. Louis who was worth anything, and most of the players were compelled to admit the truth of the observation.

"But," said Darrow, "they were Number Two and Number Three on the right; why didn't they get fans to carry that coffin instead of ball-players?"

The question was not intended for Kerrigan's ears, but from the shower-bath, he heard it. Also, he was among those present when Jerry Boland, manager of the club, stormed into the office one morning while the team was sitting around reading the daily papers and waiting for the pay-checks to be distributed.

"I told you fellows to keep away from that fly-trap lunch-counter at Vernon," stormed Boland. "Yates and Cluff are down with typhoid, serves you right if you all get it. The very day after we left, the Health Office closed the place."

Out of the corner of one eye Kerrigan saw Truck Darrow look at Patterson and hold up first four fingers, and then five, before resuming his perusal of the sporting page. In the silence that followed, the pitcher sensed what was in the minds of everyone, excepting possibly Boland. They were wondering whether the sixth pallbearer, still in their midst, would succumb quickly to the cycle of misfortune, or whether he would stubbornly fight it and compel the whole club to continue under the influence of the "Oofy-goof."

Kerrigan merely tightened his belt and his lips and set himself to fight the thing out. It was late in June that he first became aware that the Badgers were not hitting behind him as well as was their habit. At first he put it down to the fact that he was invariably pitted against the best pitchers on opposing clubs, and that with the coming of hot weather, twirlers as a rule have an edge on the batsmen. He discarded both suggestions in the face of the obvious fact that the club hit better behind every other man on the staff, no matter who was opposing them.

Never for a moment did he harbor the thought that his teammates were deliberately lying down on him. There are easier ways of throwing away a game than failing to hit. Batting is the breath of life to a ball-player; his "average" is his bread and butter. The Badgers hit hard behind Kerrigan, but either at the wrong time or into the hands of the fielders.

For a while he did what any other man would do under the

circumstances—pleaded with his team-mates between innings to come to life:

"Come on, boys, stake me to a couple of runs, and I'll hold you. You hit this guy all over the lot last week. Stake me to just one marker."

But when, with fourteen victories to his credit, the Badgers went three full games, twenty-seven innings, behind him without scoring a run, Kerrigan accepted the inevitable and sat day after day in the dugout, staring up at an open window that overlooked the St. Clair ball-park. If the others only knew it, up there behind that window, was really the sixth victim.

There are limits to what a ball-club will stand. Matters came to a head in the last game of a series with the Portland club. For once it seemed as if the Goddess of Fortune had relented and again condescended to beam upon the Badgers. But the fielder's eye, it developed, was only laughing.

Kerrigan was pitching his usual hard-luck game, but in the last half of the ninth the Badgers filled the bases, with no one out and only two runs necessary to win. All the more promising was Darrow's turn at bat, and the big catcher was a deadly man in the pinches.

He dug his cleats into the loose soil of the batter's box, and with the count on him standing "one and two," flashed the

and-run signal. The runners went into stride with the swing of the pitcher's arm, and were leaping it halfway down the base-line when Darrow's bat rang full and true against the horsehide. A white bullet shot toward left field.

Now, the luck of the diamond is a curious thing. Six inches higher or to either side, and the drive would have won the game. But the ball went to one target, and to one target only—straight into the gloved hand of the third-baseman, who leaped into the air to meet it. It took but a moment to touch third and snap the ball to second, completing a triple play that ended the contest.

The team undressed in the ominous silence that marks a ball-club that has something on its mind. One after another they straggled into the open and there remained only a heavy-shouldered figure sitting on a bench and plucking thoughtfully at a worn-out glove.

Kerrigan was conscious that the parting of the ways had come. Five days later he found himself facing Boland across a table in the ball-club's office.

"Bill," said the manager, "I'm sorry, but I've got to let you go. Maybe a change of uniform will help you; sometimes it works out that way."

Kerrigan nodded.

"I've tried to place you back with the White Sox, and then with the other clubs in this

League, but they all seem willing to waive on you. I don't understand."

"It's simple," said the pitcher; "toolie-woolie."

Boland sighed and tapped the desk. "I don't believe in such things, Bill, but the boys do; and it's bad, very bad. I could make a deal for you in the bushes, but I don't like to do that with a man who's been on the square with me. I'm going to make you a free agent, and you can take the best job that's open."

Kerrigan thanked him. "I was trying hard to win, Jerry."

"I know it, Bill."

"I wanted the bonus for a purpose," pursued the pitcher. "You see—"



"I'll be careful, Dad. It's the third inning, and the Tigers are ahead."

Good cheer and good spirits I treasure—
Good fare for my friends and myself.
I never can measure the health and the pleasure
Stored up on this wonderful shelf.



A "private stock" worth while

Just a step from the pantry and almost without lifting a finger you have this delicious soup all ready for your table!

An invigorating dish to start the meal off with a glow, waken your appetite and make all the food taste better, and do more good.

Campbell's Tomato Soup

It is the pure delightful juice of luscious tomatoes, picked when they are red-ripe and made into soup the same day. You get the full, stimulating tonic effect of the tomato, enriched with creamery butter, granulated sugar, and other ingredients to season and make it still more nourishing and appetizing.

Good soup every day is one of health's big rules.

21 kinds

15c a can

Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED AND WHITE LABEL

He hesitated and then sealed his lips, aware that a man does not under certain circumstances capitalize the misfortunes of his flesh and blood.

"I suppose you had some special reason," Boland commented. "A thousand bones comes in handy once in a while; I'd like to have seen you win it, but if you were my brother, I couldn't do any different."

"Sure," assented Kerrigan; "that's baseball. It's the luck of the game, only sometimes it's—pretty—tough."

He rose abruptly. "Good-by, Jerry, and I hope you win the flag."

"And I hope you catch on with a real ball-club, Bill," Boland echoed, "not a lot of damn' fools. Drop me a line, old-timer, and keep your head up!"

Kerrigan walked out of the office and turned mechanically to the left. Halfway to his flat he stopped and retraced his steps, then repeated the maneuver. Finally he struck off in the direction of his doctor's address. Following the consultation, he walked downtown and paused in front of a window which displayed that for which he was looking. He entered the store.

"I want," he told the man behind the counter, "a pair of crutches."

"For yourself?"

"No," Kerrigan replied, "for a little boy."

"I understand," nodded the man. "I have two of them at home myself."

Kerrigan tucked the long bundle under his arm and walked slowly home, to discover his son peering out the window through the glasses.

"Why, Dad," Jimmy exclaimed, "it's Wednesday, and your turn to work. Did you get a day off? Is that bundle something for me?"

"Yes, Son," I got a day off, and I brought you home something. He sat down heavily by the bed and took a small hand in his own, fingering it tenderly.

"You poor little Toolie-woolie," he crooned, "you been rooting mighty hard for your old Dad, haven't you?"

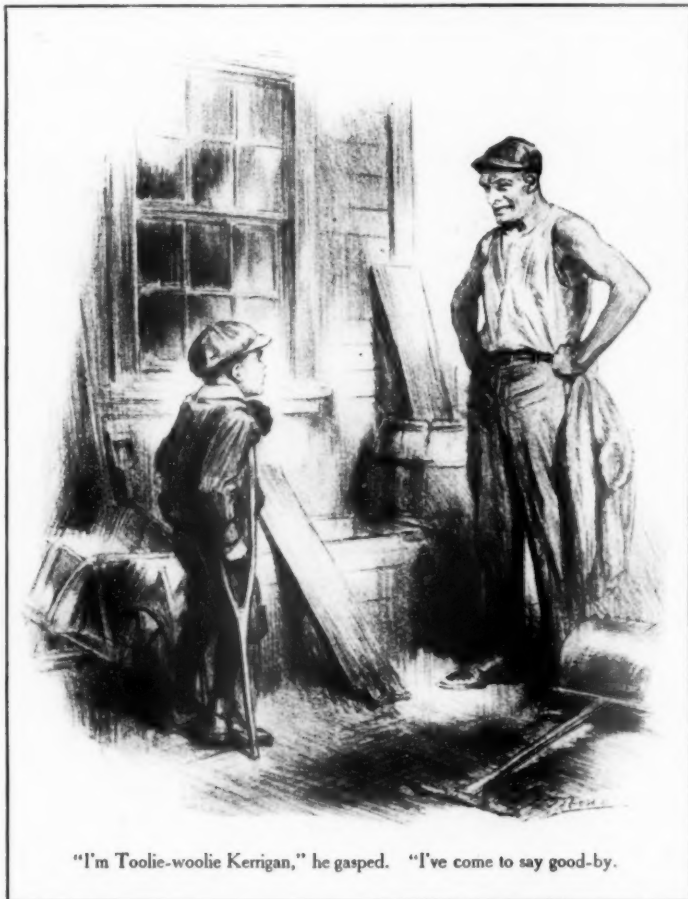
"We're going to win, too," nodded the boy; "aint we? We're going to win the pennant. The luck's going to change; you said it always does."

Kerrigan took the plunge.

"Yes, Son, the luck is going to change some day, sure enough; but—first, you and I have to go away somewheres; don't know just where right now, but I'm going to send out some telegrams. You see, I haven't been going very good, and

when a pitcher don't win in one place, ne's got to go somewhere else."

"And will Truck Darrow and Peewee Patterson and the rest of the Badgers go along too, Dad? I like the Badgers; I can tell every one of them by sight.



"I'm Toolie-woolie Kerrigan," he gasped. "I've come to say good-by."

Kerrigan's lips twitched. "I'm afraid we got to go alone, Son; it's the luck of the game; we've got to join some other club."

While the boy watched, wide-eyed, Kerrigan unfastened the weights at the foot of the bed and then unwrapped the bundle he had brought.

"Am I going back to my crutches, Dad?" Jimmy asked. "I thought I wasn't to do that till I went to the hospital, till the big league Doc came?"

Kerrigan sighed. The situation was beyond him. "We need a little more money, Son. I was counting on that bonus, and now I'm not going to get it. We got to make a start all over, and meanwhile the Doc, our old Doc, says it wont hurt you to move around a little on crutches again, so long as you don't disturb the splints. When we get to where we're going, you can go back to bed, and maybe we can still get that big leaguer. Swing around now easy, and I'll put your clothes on."

When this operation was completed, and one leg of the small trousers fastened over the splints with safety pins, Jimmy Kerrigan swayed precariously across the room on the crutches.

"I feel kind o' funny," he announced. "I guess it's from being in bed so long. I guess I better practice a bit. Are we going away in a train, Dad?"

"I think so, Son; I'll know when I come back. I'm going out to send some telegrams. You better get back on the bed now and rest before you do any more. I'll tell Mrs. Ruether to look in on you. All you got to do is to rap on the floor if you need anything."

"I'll be careful, Dad. I'll keep right here by the window. It's the third inning, and the Tigers are ahead. Gee, whiz! there's Truck at the bat now. He most always hits it this way, don't he?"

"If they feed him one on the inside," agreed Kerrigan. "Yep, there it goes! Two bases, Truck! Hit the dirt!"

Far below them a figure flashed into second and arose in a puff of dust. Kerrigan drew a deep breath.

"Well, I got to be going, Son. You aint blaming your dad for not winning more games, are you kid?"

The boy shook his head and smiled. Then once more he looked out the window. Kerrigan closed the door softly.

Mrs. Ruether puffed up the stairs twice. On the last occasion the boy was standing on his crutches by the win-

dow, absorbed in the ninth-inning tussle, going on out there.

"I'm running down to the corner after some potatoes, Jimmy," she announced; "I wont be gone long."

He did not so much as turn his head. Peewee Patterson was at bat, with three and two on him, and there were two out. The third baseman fanned. Down below Jimmy Kerrigan's window the bleacher gates swung wide, and the crowd debouched into the street.

The boy sighed. He would like to have seen the Badgers win, even though his father was not pitching. He would like to have been able to think of them always as winning. He looked down at the big green pond, now cleared of its gray, skimming water-bugs. His father had said they were going away. He would not see the Badgers for a long time, he might never see them again.

With a sick child's imagination, he had endowed each man on the St. Clair ball club with heroic qualities. He knew just what he would say to each of them when he was able to go down and be introduced. He had rehearsed it all many times. And now he would never meet them; he would not be able even to say good-by.



Try this famous treatment for blackheads

Apply hot cloths to the face until the skin is reddened. Then with a rough washcloth work up a heavy lather of Woodbury's Facial Soap and rub it into the pores thoroughly, always with an upward and outward motion. Rinse with clear, hot water, then with cold—the colder the better. If possible, rub your face for thirty seconds with a piece of ice. Dry carefully. To remove the blackheads already formed, substitute a flesh brush for the washcloth in the treatment above. Then protect the fingers with a handkerchief and press out the blackheads.

The other famous treatments for the commoner troubles of the skin, as well as the above, are given in the booklet wrapped around every cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap.

Blackheads are a confession

BLACKHEADS are a confession that you are using the wrong method of cleansing for your type of skin. Try the treatment given above and see how easily you can keep your skin free from this disfiguring trouble.

Make this treatment a daily habit, and it will give you the clear, attractive skin that the steady use of Woodbury's brings.

You will find treatments for all the commoner troubles of the skin in the booklet wrapped around every cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap. Get a cake today and begin tonight the treatment your skin needs. A 25-cent cake is sufficient for a month or six weeks of any Woodbury facial treatment and for general use for that time. Woodbury's is on sale at drug stores and toilet goods counters throughout the United States and Canada.

"Your treatment for one week"

A beautiful little set of the Woodbury skin preparations sent to you for 25 cents

Send 25c for this dainty miniature set of Woodbury's skin preparations, containing your complete Woodbury treatment for one week.

You will find, first, the booklet, "A Skin You Love to Touch," telling you the special treatment your skin needs; then a trial size cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap—enough for seven nights of any treatment; samples of the new Woodbury Facial Cream, Woodbury's Cold Cream and Facial Powder, with directions telling you just how they should be used. Write today for this special new Woodbury outfit. Address The Andrew Jergens Co., 1704 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio.

If you live in Canada, address The Andrew Jergens Co., Limited, 1704 Sherbrooke Street, Perth, Ontario.

How to reduce enlarged pores

Enlarged pores make the skin coarse in texture. To reduce them, try the special Woodbury treatment for this trouble, given in the booklet wrapped around every cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap.



He pondered over this subversion of the natural order of things, until out of his meditations grew an idea so daring that it almost swept his breath away. He took a firmer hold on his crutches and leaned out the window, the better to study the situation. A steep, spiral stairway descended from the back porch to the yard below, where a gate opened into the street. Thence it was only a matter of fifty feet to the bleacher entrance to the park. The place was empty save for the ground-keeper and a score of small boys who were collecting cushions and pop-bottles in the grandstand. The players were in the clubhouse.

Thumping across the room, Jimmy paused at the door and listened. No sound came from the hall or from below. Cautiously he made his way to the back porch, and clinging with one hand to the wooden railing, began a laborious descent. It took him so long that when at length he reached the bottom, he was fearful that his father or Mrs. Ruether might have returned, and that he would be intercepted before he could attain his mission. Therefore he made as much haste as he could, hunching forward through the big gate, and along the turf of the outfield.

HE was halfway to the ramshackle clubhouse when the reaction came and he paused to look back dizzily. Gradually the high fence ceased to revolve, and earth and sky assumed their normal positions. At which moment Truck Darrow, half-clad, appeared in the doorway and descended to hang a damp undershirt on the clothesline. The sight of one of his heroes gave Jimmy renewed courage. He set his small teeth firmly together and began to count as he swung his crutches forward.

Three times he counted up to twenty and started over again, when he heard a voice, that seemed to come from ever so far away, call!

"Here you are, kid; you want a ball?"

Jimmy looked up to find himself within hand-shake distance of his favorite. Once more the world turned into a topsy-turvy, green bowl. He pulled himself together and forced the speech:

"I'm little Toolie-woolie Kerrigan," he gasped. "I've come to say good-by, and I wish you—"

He toppled gently forward into the catcher's arms.

Of what followed, Jimmy Kerrigan remembered nothing. He was unaware that Truck Darrow picked him up, crutches and all, and carried him into the clubhouse, that the Badgers, not knowing that Kerrigan was a father, swarmed helplessly around Big Bill's miniature until old Mrs. Ruether, bareheaded and wringing her hands, hurried into their midst with a story that set them to jabbering worse than ever. Nor did the boy know that Jerry Boland himself carried him home and called two doctors, and then met Bill Kerrigan hurrying up the stairs and called the big pitcher some most extraordinary names. Also he was blissfully ignorant that Jerry Boland went back to the clubhouse and closed the door on the entire team, and that in the conference that followed, Truck Darrow pointed out that he had two tykes of

his own at home, and that if any man thought that he, Darrow, was going to run a crippled kid out of the league, let that man step out into the middle of the room and he'd show him.

"Oh, to hell with that stuff," was Bud Mannix' terse comment. "We all run his old man off the club, and you know it. Now, what are we going to do about it?"

It was little Pee wee Patterson, whose batting average for the season was only two points over his own weight, who picked up a bat and weighing it thoughtfully, solved the riddle by remarking: "Something tells me there is a hit left in this stick. Send Big Bill into work tomorrow, and let the kid watch from the window. We've bucked this thing long enough; now let's try it the other way."

As it was, when Jimmy Kerrigan opened his eyes, his father and Dunlap, the club physician, were bending over him.

"I don't think any more damage has been done," Dunlap was saying. "But how in the name of Adam could he get that far with those splints on him? By all means let Courtier look at him when he comes. It is a badly comminuted fracture of the femur, and nothing but a bone graft, a very wonderful bone graft, can save the limb. I remember now, Hinsdale was telling me of the case. Hello, sonny, had a good sleep, didn't you?"

"Was I sleeping?" Jimmy Kerrigan frowned. "Gee whiz, Dad, I had a funny dream! Seems like I was saying good-by to Truck Darrow and wishing him good luck; and then, I guess, I woke up. Aint we going away, after all?"

Mrs. Ruether knocked on the door, at that moment. "Mr. Boland is on the phone," she announced, "and wants to know how Jimmy is getting along."

"I'll speak to him," said Kerrigan.

He was back again a few minutes later, to put long arms around his boy.

"You weren't dreaming, Son," he said.

"You *did* say good-by to Truck, sure enough, but we may not go away for a little while longer. I'm going to work tomorrow; we're *all* going to work tomorrow. Feeling all right?"

Jimmy nodded drowsily.

PEEWEE PATTERSON got his hit.

It came when the shadows were deep over the outfield in the last half of the fifteenth inning, after the Badgers and Tigers had been battling unavailingly for almost three hours. It was the scratchiest sort of a hit, a ball that bounded badly over the keystone, eluding Walsh at second; and it scored Pete Loomis with the only run of the game. And because it *was* a fluke hit, Pee wee Patterson gathered his tired team-mates around him in the clubhouse and loudly demanded:

"Do I know something, or don't I? Pitch Big Bill three times a week, and keep little Toolie-woolie in the window. The luck's turned!"

The following day, when the team was dressing for the game, Slim O'Connor, the first baseman, stamped over the littered floor in his underwear with murder in his eye. "My shirt," he raved, "my red undershirt—some guy swiped it! I

wore it yesterday, and I hung it right on that hook. What son of a skull—" He stopped as he discovered the missing article under a pile of bath-towels, and calmed down.

Boland grinned, aware that every man on his club was dressing exactly as he had the day before, as is the custom of a team which desires to encourage the God of Things As They Should Be.

FOR a while the Badgers picked up amazingly, climbing to the top of the second division; then they faltered, for Kerrigan won his twentieth game, and took the night train out of Los Angeles, and every man on the team knew that little Toolie-woolie, who had come to say good-by, was going under the knife and it was a matter of doubt whether the old "Oofy-goof" was finally driven off or not.

In all truth, the Badgers were afraid, not for themselves but for some one else; and that is "the most soul-satisfying fear on earth."

They were nearly all married men, and yet children at heart, as most ball-players ever remain; little Toolie-woolie Kerrigan had touched them to the quick.

Rumors came down from San Francisco—how no one knew—and they were passed from mouth to mouth on the bench, then out to the coaching line: The operation was not a success. They had taken little Toolie-woolie's leg off. The kid was dead.

"I didn't get any such wire at all," Boland denied. "I'll telephone to the hospital tonight. For the love of God, *play ball!*"

Boland rang up over a distance of four hundred miles, and the reply he received from the hospital was professionally non-committal and cautious. The patient was doing as well as could be expected it seemed. It was too early to tell anything definite as yet.

"You didn't even get to first," complained Truck Darrow. "Why the hell didn't you find out whether they took his leg off?"

But the next day there came a telegram from Big Bill which set their minds at rest: "*Operation complete success. Jimmy sends regards.*"

That afternoon the Badgers shut out the league-leaders by a score of seven to nothing.

Truck Darrow was on third with one out when the Tiger right-fielder loped forward and took a short fly not fifty feet back of first. The outfielder looked at the runner hugging his bag, and tossed the ball to the pitcher. And what did heavy-hoofed, slow-thinking Truck Darrow do? Oh, nothing—only note the careless swing of the fielder's arm, and lower his head like a Durham bull and charge for the plate. And with the aid of all the angels and a high throw, he made it!

Ham Dolan, in left, hurdled the railing twice and took two foul balls off the first step of the bleachers, something that no one had ever seen done before.

And Pee wee Patterson, confronted with a throw that was impossible to field cleanly, put his one hundred and thirty-one pounds in the path of Digger Grimes and pinned the runner six inches off third



Great silk and silk blouse manufacturers tell how silk should be laundered

"Wash silks this way" say Belding Bros.

"As makers of a delicate product like silk we are much concerned with the treatment it gets after it leaves our hands.

"Our wash silk fabrics can, of course, be laundered as safely and as often as cotton, if proper care is exercised.

"We have found Lux to be ideal for washing silks because of its great purity and gentleness. There is nothing in it that could attack the delicate silk fibre.

"Another point in favor of Lux is that its thick lather eliminates all rubbing of the fabric on the washboard or between the hands. This means, of course, that the silk does not 'fuzz up,' and that the threads will not pull or split.

"We find Lux equally successful on our white or colored silks.

"We are glad to see the publicity given by Lux to the safe way of laundering silks."

BELDING BROS.



Colored silks—If you are not sure a color is fast try to set it this way. Use one-half cup of vinegar to a gallon of cold water and soak for two hours.

Press silks on the wrong side while they are still damp. Sprinkling a silk will make it look spotty, and this appearance can only be overcome by re-laundering.

For years, Belding Brothers have been making silks. They make millions of yards each year, and they make all kinds—from the frailest georgettes and chiffons to the sturdy satins, taffetas and crêpes de Chine. The panel to the left gives Belding Brothers' interesting letter on the proper way to launder silks.

You will find blouses made by Max Held, Inc., in most of the smart specialty shops and good department stores throughout the country. Read why this famous maker wants you to wash his blouses with Lux.

THESE two great merchants, by the very nature of their business, were compelled to find the proper way to launder silk—the way that would be best and safest. Incorrect methods mean a heavy money loss to them just as incorrect methods mean a heavy loss to you in the wear and appearance of your fine silk things.

Keep the detailed directions below, which tell you just exactly how to wash your silks—the way recommended by one of the largest silk manufacturers in the world, and by a man whose silk blouses are worn by thousands of women each year. Lever Bros. Co., Cambridge, Mass.

Launder your silk things this gentle, safe way

Whisk one tablespoonful of Lux into a thick lather in half a bowlful of very hot water. Add cold water till lukewarm. Dip the garment up and down, pressing suds repeatedly

through soiled spots. Rinse in 3 lukewarm waters. Squeeze water out—do not wring. Roll in towel; when nearly dry, press with warm iron—never a hot one.



The maker of a million blouses tells how to launder silk

"Once in a while," writes Max Held, Inc., "a blouse is returned to us as unsatisfactory. We are sure of the materials in our blouses, and of our workmanship, but we are not sure of the treatment the blouse gets after the owner has it.

"If women would wash their blouses with Lux, 90 per cent of our complaints would disappear.

"Frayed, pulled threads may mean, not a poor quality of silk, but a blouse rubbed too hard to get it clean. Lux makes hard rubbing unnecessary.

"Recently a silk blouse was returned to us which had 'gone' under the arm. It had been put away while badly stained with perspiration. The perspiration acids had eaten the silk, and harsh soap and rubbing completed the destruction. If that blouse had been washed with Lux as soon as it was soiled we would not have had the complaint.

"For our own protection, we recommend the use of Lux in washing silks."

MAX HELD, Inc.



A hot iron should never be used on silk. It will cause the silk to split. It also makes it stiff and papery, and will yellow it. Press first the sleeves of a blouse, next the fronts and then the back.

Jersey and georgette crêpe should be stretched to shape before they dry and should also be shaped as you iron.

Won't injure anything pure water alone won't harm



Let me tell you more about my Baby Book

My volunteer clinic work and my correspondence with thousands of mothers have taught me to know most of the problems which distress those who are entering the blessed but trying state of motherhood.

Of course, lots of things you leave to the doctor, and you should, but unfortunately most doctors have never been mothers and cannot always comprehend a mother's view-point.

What I have tried to produce is a text book for mothers, written by a mother. It tells how to prepare for motherhood and seeks to guide you through those first scary weeks when Baby seems more like a-miracle than a human being. It tells about food, clothing, bath, first aids, nursery furnishings and hundreds of other such things.

I am sure you will find it helpful, and doctors and nurses who have read it assure me that everything in the book is in accord with sound, modern practice. It is fully indexed for constant reference.

My book is published by The Mennen Company, for which I am glad, because I think their Borated Talcum and Kora-Konia have contributed more to babies' comfort and happiness than any other preparations I know about.

Although the book is finely bound and illustrated and would ordinarily sell for at least a dollar, The Mennen Company will mail a limited number for 25 cents. I hope every mother in the United States gets a copy—and consults it every day.

Lovingly,

Belle.

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What nurses think:—

"A wonderful aid to any mother."
"Every copy should mean a better baby."
"Reduces baby culture to a science."

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Address



while he pawed for the ball, found it and quickly hammered it home on the runner's ribs.

Then there was a most excellent fist-fight, but Ump Munholland stuck to his decision, for umpires are only human, and they always ride with a fighting team.

THERE is no stopping a ball-club once it begins to play over its head. It will murder the best pitcher that ever stepped on the mound, and steal the clothes off the opposing catcher. The game is won even before the umpire brushes off the plate, and both teams know it. It is merely a question of the size of the score.

Coast league history records how the Badgers broke into the first division the last week in August, and a month later came pounding down the home-stretch on the heels of the Tigers, with the fans of seven cities urging them on.

But history omits one detail. When Big Bill Kerrigan, pitching a nervous and self-conscious game, won the pennant for the St. Clair club by virtue of the vicious hitting of the men behind him, the Badgers paused on their triumphant rush to

the clubhouse to gather under a window that overlooked the left-field bleachers. At that window Jimmy Kerrigan, now able to sit propped up on his pillows, waved both small arms in acknowledgment of their cheers and asked them to come up, an invitation which they accepted, to the last man.

For all things there are explanations. Spike Norton, baseball analyst for the Tiger following, went to some pains to interview a University of California professor, who said among other things:

"There is a law of average that underlies all games of chance. This law operates on the principle of a pendulum, which having swung so far in one direction, must eventually swing just as far the other. The Badgers, having suffered from a long series of misfortunes, experienced a corresponding run of luck, demonstrating an interesting scientific truth."

"Well, mebbe so," commented Truck Darrow, "and mebbe not; anyway, Big Bill pitches for us next season, and little Toolie-woolie is the bat boy, or I jump the club!"

SATAN AND THE SPIRIT

(Continued from page 70)

"I guess it's too late," he replied. "Besides, I'm just as well without any more."

His new acquaintance, however, would take no refusal, and eventually they all descended from the car and passed through a cheerful little hall into a small morning-room, where a bright fire was burning in the grate. The Spirit came no farther than the threshold of the room. She stood looking at Mr. Cray with strange and mournful intensity.

"Good night," she said. "You have been very kind to me."

"Say, wont you take off that mask for a moment before you go?" Mr. Cray begged. "I'd like to be able to recognize you when we meet again."

She shook her head very slightly. Her husband frowned across at her in good-natured annoyance.

"Look here, Mina," he protested, "why don't you do as Mr. Cray asks? I'm pretty sick of the damned thing myself."

"I cannot," she answered simply. "I have promised."

"Rubbish!" her husband answered testily. "There isn't anyone to promise."

"Good-by, Mr. Cray," she said.

"Good evening, Mrs. Hartopp," he replied, with a bow. "I'd like it first-rate if you and your husband could fix it up to take dinner with me at the Milan some night."

"You are very kind," she murmured, and drifted away.

Major Hartopp drew a little breath of undisguised relief at the closing of the door. He pulled up an easy-chair to the fire and almost pushed his guest into it. Then he mixed him a whisky-and-soda of generous proportions, served himself also with liberality, and sank down upon a couch opposite to his guest.

"Mr. Cray," he confided, "I feel that I owe you an explanation."

"I wouldn't go so far as that," his vis-

à-vis replied, "but I must admit that your wife puzzled me some."

"Do you know anything about spiritualism?" Major Hartopp asked.

"Not a thing," Mr. Cray acknowledged.

"Neither do I, but it seems that my wife, before I married her, was a medium."

"Holds converse with spirits, and that sort of thing?" Mr. Cray ventured dubiously.

"Worse!" his companion groaned. "Spirits actually take possession of her, enter into her body, speak with her tongue, crush out her own personality and obtrude their own."

"You don't say!" Mr. Cray murmured.

"It seems that she has a personality or spirituality which very few human beings in the world possess," his companion went on. "Hers, they tell me, is one of the few bodies in the world accessible to the sympathetic dead. They seem to have a taste for revelry, too. One of them always weighs in if we are going to a dance or anything of that sort. Christine Saboa turned up at eight o'clock this evening, just as we were settling down to dinner. Completely spoiled the whole pleasure of the dance for me. I hate spooks."

Mr. Cray studied Major Hartopp for several moments with half-closed eyes. He was to all appearance the perfect prototype of the well-bred, simple-minded, moderately intelligent young British soldier. He had a slight ruddy mustache which went well with his sunburned cheeks, blue eyes and fair hair, inclined to curl. He looked rather like a spoiled boy who has been defrauded of his evening's entertainment.

"Do you seriously believe what you are telling me?" Mr. Cray demanded.

"Damn it all, man," was the irritable reply, "you don't suppose I should joke over such an infernal business!"

**The lovely hands of
Mary Nash**

posed especially for Cutex.
Miss Nash is an enthusiastic
user of Cutex. She says:—
"I don't see how I ever tolerated
having my cuticle cut. Cutex is
so easy to use, so quick, and
makes my nails look so much
better. They are really lovely."



Photographs taken especially for Cutex by Baron de Meyer

This photograph, posed by a well-known New York man especially for Cutex, shows the grooming that is characteristic of the cultivated American.

Well kept hands— a national characteristic

Americans known by the grooming of their finger nails

ONCE it was good teeth. This was due less to natural excellence than to the fact that American dentistry was the best in the world.

And so, also, today the reputation of American hands depends less on their native beauty than on the fact that practically all Americans of refinement take good care of their nails.

Yet even Americans have not always enjoyed this reputation. Once most of us—even very particular people—didn't bother much about our nails. Manicuring was too slow, tedious and even dangerous because there was no way of removing the dead cuticle except by cutting.

But now we remove the cuticle simply and safely without cutting with Cutex Cuticle Remover, a harmless liquid which simply takes off the ugly, dead cuticle as soap and water take off dirt, leaving a

beautifully even nail rim. Then with the Cutex Nail White—a snowy whiteness under the tips: with the Cutex Polishes—a jewel-like shine on the nails, and, in only about ten minutes, the manicure is complete and perfect.

To give your nails the grooming that present-day standards require:

First, the Cuticle Remover. Dip the orange stick wrapped in cotton into the bottle of Cutex and work around the nail base, gently pushing back the cuticle. Wash the hands; then, when drying them, push the cuticle downwards. The ugly dead cuticle will simply wipe off.

Then the Nail White. This is to remove stains and to give the nail tips that immaculate whiteness without which one's nails never seem freshly manicured. Squeeze the paste under the nails directly from the tube.

Finally the Polish. A delightful, jewel-like shine is obtained by using first the

paste and then the powder, and burnishing by brushing the nails lightly across the hand. Or you can get an equally lovely lustre, without burnishing, by giving the nails a light coat of the Liquid Polish.

Try a Cutex manicure today. You will be amazed to see how cleanly the Cuticle Remover takes off the ragged edges, and what a smooth nail rim it leaves. You will be pleased with the immaculate beauty of your nail tips and with the delicate sheen of your nails.

Cutex manicure sets come in three sizes. The "Compact" 60c; the "Traveling" \$1.50; the "Boudoir" \$3.00. Or each of the Cutex items comes separately at 35c. At all drug and department stores.

Complete Trial Outfit for 20c

Mail the coupon below with two dimes for a Cutex Introductory Set to Northam Warren, 114 West 17th Street, New York; or, if you live in Canada, to Dept. 604, 200 Mountain Street, Montreal.

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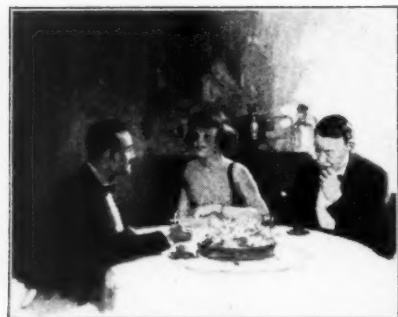
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\$1.50





Which of these two men has learned the secret of 15 minutes a day?

The secret is contained in the free book offered below. Until you have read it you have no idea how much 15 minutes a day can mean in growth and success. Send for your copy now.

HERE are two men, equally good-looking; equally well-dressed. You see such men at every social gathering. One of them can talk of nothing beyond the mere day's news. The other brings to every subject a wealth of side light and illustration that makes him listened to eagerly.

He talks like a man who had traveled widely, though his only travels are a business man's trips. He knows something of history and biography, of the work of great scientists, and the writings of philosophers, poets, and dramatists.

Yet he is busy, as all men are, in the affairs of every day. How has he found time to acquire so rich a mental background? When there is such a multitude of books to read, how can any man be well-read?

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"For me," wrote one man who had sent in the coupon, "your little free book meant a big step forward, and it showed me besides the way to vast new worlds of pleasure."



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By mail, absolutely free and without obligation, send me the little guidebook to the most famous books in the world, describing Dr. Eliot's Five-Foot Shelf of Books, and containing the plan of reading recommended by Dr. Eliot of Harvard.

Name
Address

that dreary Christine hops it, my wife will be half asleep and as cold as an icicle. Tomorrow she'll telephone to some of these spook lunatics, and they'll haunt the house for days till Mina is herself again."

MR. CRAY turned his cigar round and round in his fingers, sipped his whisky-and-soda and pondered. Just inside the room, the kit-bag which they had brought from the Albert Hall had burst one of its fastenings, and a glitter of red, the same color as the flaming costume of Mephistopheles, showed itself. He opened his lips to ask a question, but decided to postpone it. Major Hartopp was not in the least the type of a Mephistopheles. His florid complexion and his ingenuous if a little peevish expression stamped him as belonging to a different order of being altogether. Everything about him proclaimed the sports-loving young officer, who has done well enough in the army to have attained his majority and stopped there.

"I can't make out why Mina seems to have attached herself to you so much this evening," her husband ruminated. "She came to see you several times, didn't she?"

"She came twice," Mr. Cray admitted. "She had some supper the first time."

"You aren't psychic or anything of that sort, are you?"

"Not that I know of," was the cautious reply.

"Says you saw her dancing with Satan—what?"

"I saw that, all right," Mr. Cray admitted. "A weird-looking couple they made, too."

"Well, no one else did," her husband declared. "There wasn't a Satan there, as a matter of fact."

Mr. Cray's eyes rested upon the gaping kit-bag. He stroked his chin. His whole interest in the evening's adventure was reviving.

"That so?" he murmured.

"Not a sign of one," the young man continued. "According to Mina, that proves you to be possessed of negative psychic attraction. I don't know what it means, old fellow, but you've got it. She declares she was drawn to you as a trembling leaf blown by the wind."

Mr. Cray surreptitiously patted his breast pocket, where a slight protuberance indicated the continued presence of his somewhat bulky pocketbook.

"She did kinder stay round in a weird sort of fashion," he admitted. "I thought she was trying to play some joke upon me. I couldn't seem to tumble at what she was driving at, half the time."

"My wife's all right when she's herself," the young man declared irritably. "It was this infernal Christine Saboa who was trying to rake you into the spook business. Between you and me, I hate the whole thing. Half of it's buncombe, and the other half's unwholesome. Just one more small one before you go?"

"Only a spot, then," Mr. Cray assented, holding out his glass. "Not quite so strong this time."

"It's pretty nearly pre-war," his host remarked as he resumed his seat. "Great Heavens!"

Both men glanced towards the door. The Spirit was standing there—a singular apparition. A white dressing-gown hung loosely upon her; she was still wearing her black mask. Her eyes were fixed upon Mr. Cray.

"You must come," she begged, speaking very softly yet with almost singular distinctness. "You must please come. They will not let me sleep. They call for you all the time."

"I am sorry," was the hasty response, "but I'm just off for home."

Mr. Cray rose to his feet with determination. His host followed his example.

"Mina," the latter protested, "you really must not worry Mr. Cray now. You are quite mistaken in him. He's as much outside all this business as I am."

She shook her head. Her eyes still pleaded with Mr. Cray.

"If you are not happy, you shall not stay," she said, "but you must come, or they will give me no peace."

"I guess there's some mistake," Mr. Cray declared coldly. "You'll have to excuse me."

Her distress became almost a paroxysm. She clutched the framework of the door with either hand, barring their egress. Hartopp drew his guest on one side.

"Look here, Mr. Cray," he begged apologetically, "be a good chap and humor her for two minutes. Just put your head into her little sanctum. She calls it her temple. Maybe that'll satisfy her, and you needn't stay a minute."

Mr. Cray hesitated.

"Of course, it's all nonsense," the other declared, "but she'll never rest now unless you do it. I'll come along as far as the door, anyway."

Mr. Cray shrugged his shoulders, and the little procession, led by the Spirit, passed down the passage by the side of the staircase until they reached a door at the far end.

"Come," she whispered, opening it softly.

Mr. Cray stood by her side. There was no light, and the darkness was impene-

BOOTH TARKINGTON

has written for the next, the May, issue of this magazine one of the most charming and delightfully humorous stories that has ever come from his pen. Its title is

"JEANNETTE"

Your skin needs different kinds of care at different times

YOUR skin is not a piece of fabric that can always be cared for in the same way. It is a living thing which has different needs at different times.

Before an outing, for example, your skin needs a special kind of care. Wind and dust coarsen your skin. To keep it fine textured and soft, you must give it special protection from this punishment. For this you need a special cream, a cream that has a special protective effect, yet will not leave a trace of shine on the face. Pond's Vanishing Cream is especially made for this purpose. It contains an ingredient famous for its skin-softening property. Yet it has not a bit of oil. It gives your skin just the protection it needs and cannot reappear in a wretched shine.

Before you go out, rub a tiny bit of Pond's Vanishing Cream into your skin. It disappears instantly leaving your face soft and smooth, protected from the injury of wind and dust.



More and more women are discovering how they can remain powdered and free from shine for five or six hours. Before powdering, they apply a bit of greaseless cream.



Before you go out, protect your complexion from the dust, wind and sun this way.

Another time when your skin needs a special kind of care is before powdering. When you powder right on the dry skin, the powder catches on small rough places and makes them for a time more conspicuous than ever. Then the powder soon falls off, leaving your face shinier than ever.

Before powdering you need a special cream to smooth away the rough places and hold the powder to the face. For this as for all daytime uses, you need a cream without oil. Pond's Vanishing Cream is especially designed to smooth and soften the skin. Apply just a bit before you powder. See how it smoothes away the small rough places. Now the powder will go on much more smoothly; will stay on twice as long as ever before.

At bedtime your skin needs an entirely different kind of care. At the end of the day your pores are choked with tiny particles of dust that work in too deep to be removed by ordinary washing. These tend to make your skin look muddy. At night before retiring your skin needs a deep cleansing with an entirely different cream from the greaseless one you use in the daytime, a cream with an oil base, which will work well into the pores. Pond's Cold Cream has just the amount of oil to cleanse the skin and clear up clogged pores.

Every night and after a motor trip, give the skin a deep cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream. In this way it will become clearer, fairer.

With these two creams, give your skin the special care it needs at special times. In this way your complexion will grow more and more lovely every day.

You can get both of these creams at any drug or department store in tubes or jars.



The tiny, clinging dust specks that work deep into the skin should be removed each night with an oil cream.

PONDS

Cold Cream & Vanishing Cream

One with an oil base and one without any oil

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Please send me, free, the items checked:

A free sample of Pond's Vanishing Cream

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Instead of the free samples, I desire the larger samples checked below, for which I enclose the required amount:

A 5c sample of Pond's Vanishing Cream

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SPECIAL Furniture of Karpen making in noted Public Buildings. Splendid Karpen-fitted Pullmans on Limited trains. Karpen furniture in the lounges and guest rooms of Luxurious Hotels, Clubs and Lodges.

Above all, Karpen furniture, graceful, durable comfortable, in countless American homes, for skilled craftsmen and modern methods have made possible the creation of this splendid furniture at prices within the reach of all.

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Dept. G, Chicago or New
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trable. It was also very cold, as though the windows were open. The only visible object was the Spirit standing by his side, a pillar of white, her eyes like points of fire.

"Say, what's doing here?" Mr. Cray asked a little uneasily. "Do your visitors need to come in through the window? I guess—"

"Please be quiet," a low voice begged him. "Be silent for one moment. Listen."

Mr. Cray listened, and it seemed to him that he heard the door close behind him. He half turned. The curtains were shaking as though a sudden wind were blowing into the room. Then he felt fingers upon the pulses of his wrist, and immediately it seemed to him that they were beating as though they would break through his flesh—fingers upon his temples, and immediately the sense that sledgehammers were beating there, beating against the nerves of his life. His whole sense of being had become pandemonium. The roaring of a furnace was in his ears. He felt himself sinking down and down into space, falling—lower and lower.

MR. CRAY opened his eyes. There were splashes of daylight in the sitting-room, which made the electric lights look feeble and dim. On the lounge opposite, Major Hartopp was still reclining, although he had changed his dress coat for a dressing-gown and removed his collar. He welcomed Mr. Cray's opening eyes with a little sigh of relief.

"Feeling the better for your nap?" he asked, glancing suggestively at the clock.

"My nap?" Mr. Cray repeated vaguely. His host nodded and stifled a yawn.

"You dropped off like a child," he said. "I don't want to seem inhospitable, but I think you had better wake up now. Your chauffeur has been in twice, and he doesn't seem in the best of tempers."

Mr. Cray looked at the extinct cigar which had apparently slipped from his fingers and lay upon the hearth-rug, brushed the cold ashes from his waistcoat and rose to his feet.

"What happened to me in that room?" he demanded.

"Which room?" his host asked.

"The one at the end of the passage, where you and I and your wife went together."

Major Hartopp looked at his guest hard; then he smiled.

"You've been dreaming," he observed. "You haven't left that easy-chair since you arrived, and you certainly haven't seen anything of my wife. She went straight to bed directly we got home."

"Straight to bed?" Mr. Cray repeated in a dazed tone. "You mean to tell me that she didn't come down here in a white dressing-gown and still wearing a mask, and talk about spooks who were clamoring for me in the room at the end of the passage?"

Major Hartopp stifled a yawn.

"She most certainly did not," he declared a little testily. "You'll forgive my hurrying you, old chap, won't you?" he went on, leading the way towards the door. "To tell you the truth, I'm dying to get to bed. If I'd had any idea that you were dreaming things, I'd have awakened you."

"Dreaming!" Mr. Cray muttered.

"Sounds like some sort of nightmare," the other observed. "You seemed to be sleeping so peacefully, though, that I hated to disturb you."

Mr. Cray felt suddenly for his pocket-book. It was there in its accustomed place, just as bulky and capacious as ever. Neither had the kit-bag, with its incriminating gleam of scarlet, been removed.

"Not your bag, is it?" Major Hartopp asked carelessly.

"I hadn't any grip at all," Mr. Cray answered. "Isn't it yours?"

Major Hartopp shook his head.

"Mine was practically empty. All I took in it was a couple of bottles of champagne. I set it down on the steps of the Albert Hall while we were waiting and must have picked up this one by mistake. I'll send it back presently. . . . Jove, isn't the air good!" he added, as he opened the front door and let in a little of the cold breeze. "So long! Look us up some day. You'll find us in the telephone book."

"Sure!" Mr. Cray promised. "Sorry to have kept you up," he added mechanically.

The chauffeur darted a reproachful look at his master but in a few minutes they were gliding through the wet and empty streets. Mr. Cray sat back in the corner of the car, no longer in the least sleepy, and probably the most puzzled man in London. He had no headache nor any other sign of ill-being such as might reasonably have been expected to remain with a man who had been drugged. The roll of notes remained in his pocketbook untouched. He knew better than anyone else could that he was and had been all the time perfectly sober. What explanation was there for the strange experience through which he had passed? Mentally he tabulated the various questions as they had occurred to him.

One: was Mrs. Hartopp simply a foolish and hysterical woman who had imposed even upon her husband, and who had attached herself to him out of caprice?

Two: was she really a medium and in direct communication with the spirit world, in which, till now, he had had no faith?

Three: was she a clever adventuress with fraudulent designs upon him? Against that, his pocketbook and jewelry were still untouched.

Four: what was the position of Major Hartopp?

Five: had he, Cray, really slept in his easy-chair and only dreamed of that brief period of unconsciousness?

There was something in the early morning atmosphere which encouraged common sense. One by one Mr. Cray discarded the suspicions which had grown up in his mind. By the time he had reached his rooms at the Milan Court, he had almost forgotten them. With a pleasant sense of luxury, he undressed and plunged into a steaming bath, lying there for a few minutes with half-closed eyes before stretching out his hand lazily for the sponge and soap. Suddenly he sat bolt upright, gazing at the first finger of his right hand. At exactly the spot where he was in the habit of grasping his fountain pen was a deep smudge of ink. He stared



Given Away!

A can of Old English Wax will be given away with every Waxer-Polisher. This entirely new Old English device puts the wax on the floor and polishes the floor. *Not a weighted floor brush.* It makes floor-polishing as easy and simple as running a carpet-sweeper. It lasts a lifetime. If your dealer can't supply you, we can. Use the coupon below for this short-time offer.

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That soft, beautiful lustre you've admired in your friends' homes; that evidence of good taste in every room; that spick-and-span look of floors, furniture, and woodwork—you, too, can have it easily.

It's very simple. Just spread a thin film of Old English Wax on the surface. In a few minutes a little rubbing will bring it to a beautiful polish and produce a hard, wear-resisting finish that will last for months.

All you need to have beautiful floors, woodwork, and furniture is a soft cloth and a can of Old English Wax. Or, for your floors, if you prefer, you can use the Old English Waxer-Polisher shown in the picture. It's the new, easy way to put on wax and polish floors.

Beautify your floors with Old English Wax. You can, no matter whether they are hardwood or softwood, varnished or shellaced. The floors may be walked on as

soon as polished. Heel-marks or scratches cannot penetrate the hard wax finish, and the floors will grow more beautiful with age.

Because Old English Wax contains more hard, high-grade imported wax than any other, it goes further, lasts longer, and *costs less than one-third* of any other kind of finish. One pint can, at 85c, will cover the entire floor of a room 14 by 18 feet.

Try a can of Old English Wax. You will be delighted with the spick-and-span look it will give your home.

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Contains expert advice based on over a quarter of a century's experience in finishing—

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Old English Brightener is the ideal cleaner for your floors—waxed, varnished or shellaced—and for your woodwork and furniture. It is the preparation that cleans perfectly *without injuring the finish*. It leaves a light film which polishes beautifully, protects against wear, and makes the finish last twice as long. Contains no oil, so it will not collect dust, discolor the wood or soil your rugs.

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☐ Send me, all charges paid, an Old English Waxer-Polisher—at the special time-limited price, \$2.50 (Denver and West, \$3.00), which I enclose.

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two souls with but
a single thought—
"the bristles
DON'T
come out"

R. B. DOWLER & CO.
MANUFACTURERS & AGENTS
ELECTRICAL MACHINERY
DALLAS TEXAS

May 7, 1920.

Rubberset Company,
Newark, N. J.

Dear Sirs:

I am enclosing herewith, to be placed with your antiques, an old "Blue Ribbon" Rubberset which I purchased in 1899. It has never lost a bristle, though about an inch has been worn off.

I have a few friends who would now present a better appearance if they had had their heads treated by your process.

Yours,

(Signed) R. B. DOWLER.

(This is No. 24 of a series of ads)
(NOT written by our ad man.)

3721 Forest Ave., Chicago.
May 28, 1919.

Rubberset Company,
Newark, N. J.

Gentlemen:

They say that you can't improve on Nature, but I don't believe it. I have a Rubberset Shaving Brush and the bristles do not come out. I have a Natureset head and my hair is coming out daily. If Nature had adopted the Rubberset process of putting in hair, a bald head would be impossible.

Yours Respectfully,

(Signed)

WILL H. HENDRICKSON.

(This is No. 25 of a series of ads)
(NOT written by our ad man.)

RUBBERSET
LATHER HAIR TOOTH
TRADE MARK
BRUSHES
PAINT VARNISH STUCCO
every bristle gripped EVERLASTINGLY in hard rubber

at it in blank and complete amazement, with a host of new ideas rushing into his brain. For of one thing, Mr. Cray was absolutely and completely certain—there had been no such blemish upon his finger when he had left his box at the Albert Hall.

PRECISELY two minutes after the front doors of the South Audley Street branch of a well-known bank had been opened, Major Hartopp, smoking a cigarette and attired in immaculate mufti, descended from a taxi, strolled across the pavement, and after some fumbling in his pocket, produced a check which he handed across the counter. The manager glanced at it, glanced at another customer a few feet away, who was apparently adding up a list of deposits, and leaving the check upon the counter, moved a couple of yards to a position from which he could command a view of a small private office. He made a sign, and a moment later Mr. Cray strolled in. Major Hartopp, still lounging nonchalantly against the counter, greeted him affably.

"Morning, Mr. Cray! Up and about early, what?"

"I might say the same of you," Mr. Cray remarked pointedly.

"This gentleman has just presented a check for a thousand pounds, drawn by you," the manager announced. "May I ask if it is in order?"

"It most surely is not," was the forcible reply.

The customer who was counting the credits, and who bore a strong resemblance to the Monk of the night before, moved a little back from the counter to a position between Major Hartopp and the door. That gentleman, however, seemed in no way embarrassed.

"Check for a thousand fiddlesticks!" he scoffed. "Look at it again, my dear sir."

The manager glanced at the check, frowned in a puzzled manner, and stood for a few seconds with the air of one stricken dumb with astonishment.

"Have a look at it yourself, Mr. Cray," Major Hartopp continued. "It's a silly business, I admit, but my wife got the idea last night that you were a strong unbeliever. As you know, I'm a bit that way myself, but if that's really your signature, this Christine Saboa is a dangerous sort of a spook."

The three men gazed at the check. It was clearly enough a check for one sovereign, made out to Christine Saboa or bearer.

"It can't be my writing," Mr. Cray declared, "because I don't remember writing it, but it's the most wonderful imitation I ever saw. Come to think of it, too," he went on in a puzzled manner, "the only thing that brought me here was some ink on my fingers."

"Oh, you wrote the check, all right," Major Hartopp affirmed. "It's a trick of one of her spooks. My instructions were to cash this and to ask you to dinner."

The manager recovered his power of speech. "The most amazing part of the whole matter, is," he declared, "that I could have sworn this gentleman presented a check for a thousand pounds."

Major Hartopp smiled.

"I should scarcely have entered into a

joke of that sort," he observed. "What about that pound?"

"You signed the check, all right."

Mr. Cray nodded. His eyes were still fixed upon his indubitable signature. At a sign from him, the manager passed a pound note across the counter, which Major Hartopp folded and thrust into his coat pocket.

"Dine with us at the Carlton tonight at eight o'clock, Mr. Cray," he invited, "and I promise you shall have your pound back with interest."

"I shall be delighted," Mr. Cray murmured.

"See you later, then," the young officer concluded, nodding to the manager and taking his leisurely departure. "Good morning."

Major Hartopp left the bank, and they heard his taxi drive away. The manager stood on one side of the counter, and Mr. Cray on the other. The inspector strolled up to them. They all examined the check for a sovereign.

"This gets me," Mr. Cray confessed. "If that isn't my signature, I'll eat the check."

"And if the check he showed me three minutes ago wasn't for a thousand pounds, I'll eat it, too," the manager declared.

The inspector was called into the inner office to answer the telephone. He was out again in thirty seconds.

"We're spoofed somehow!" he exclaimed. "Major and Mrs. Hartopp are on the continent. Their house in Chelsea has been taken furnished for a month by a man and woman wanted very badly by the American police. The man is a great sleight-of-hand thief and one of the most dangerous adventurers in America. The woman has robbed New York of over fifty thousand pounds on this spook game."

THE manager suddenly stooped down, picked up a strip of paper from underneath the counter and held it out.

"A check for a thousand pounds!" he exclaimed. "I knew it!"

"Simple as A, B, C!" the inspector exclaimed. "Our crook saw at once there was something wrong. He'd got the other check ready, changed it, and slipped the thousand-pound one through the hole in the counter there for pass-books. I'll lay odds too, he's the man who got away with ten thousand pounds' worth of jewels last night, dressed in the costume of Mephistopheles."

"I saw him in it," Mr. Cray groaned.

"Where were the checks?" the inspector asked.

Mr. Cray produced his pocketbook.

"I always have two or three loose ones with me," he explained, "and I'd this roll of notes, as it happened, last night, too."

The inspector glanced at the notes and turned toward the door.

"I'm off," he exclaimed. "Lost too much time already. Ask Mr. Thomson there to examine your notes."

Mr. Cray produced them. The manager held one up to the light.

"Counterfeit!" he exclaimed. "They changed your notes, Mr. Cray, and filched your check, but what I can't understand is—how did they ever get you to sign 'em."

"I'm worrying some about that myself," Mr. Cray confided.



DODGE BROTHERS 4 DOOR SEDAN

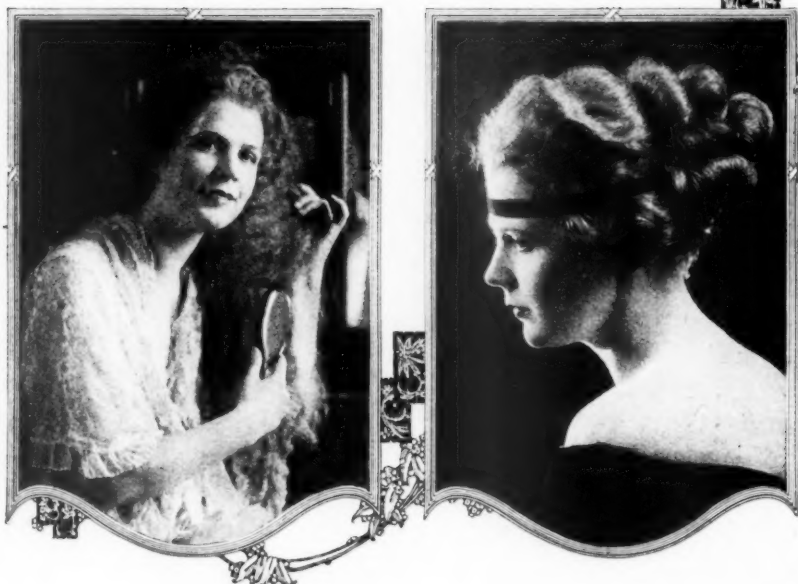
The Sedan is an easily driven car, and despite its beauty, is rugged, as are all cars which Dodge Brothers produce

They have never built a car which appealed more strongly to every member of the household

The gasoline consumption is unusually low
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How your hair and your teeth can be greatly improved

Your hair: Brush it twice a day. Use the Pro-phy-lac-tic Pen-e-trator Hair Brush. The long, stiff bristles penetrate between the strands and smooth out all kinks and snarls. This gently distributes the natural oils of the scalp, makes the hair glossy, and promotes its health and growth.

Your teeth: Acquire the twice-a-day Pro-phy-lac-tic Tooth Brush habit. The tufted bristles go be-

tween the teeth and thoroughly cleanse. The scientifically shaped curved handle allows for easy cleaning behind even the back teeth.

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THE GARAGE OF

(Continued)

himself stood near the general-delivery window until seven o'clock. By that time he was hungry again, and his feet hurt. Intrigued, he decided to stay overnight and continue his vigil on the morrow. Then he had dinner and drifted into a vaudeville theater.

Those few who had known Elberforce Jenkins twenty-five years earlier found difficulty in accepting him as the settled, dignified figure he had in fact become. Back in the middle eighteen-nineties, as a thin, suave youth, with (it was felt) more money to spend than was good for him, he had on numerous occasions mildly distressed the transplanted New Englanders who mainly composed the original population of Sunbury. He had, for one thing, delighted in driving two brisk little ponies hitched tandem to a dangerously high red cart. And he had been what was then known as a "fusser" among the many playfully pretty girls. Since his marriage, however, the fires of youth had appeared to burn quite normally out, leaving only respectability and a reasoned devotion to the routine of suburban and city business life.

BUT the fires, it was to appear, were smoldering, not dead. For when the "augmented orchestra" broke into the weirdly delightful opening measures of the "Marche Miniature," by Tschai-kowsky, and a slim little masked dancer bounded on the stage,—in the slightest of costumes, a bewitchingly grotesque little figure, softly and beautifully lighted and set out against a background of shimmering draperies,—Mr. Jenkins experienced a thrill the like of which he could not remember in a swift glance back over his whole existence.

The little person was at once exquisitely graceful, amazingly active, quaint. He thought of sprites and elves and hamadryads, of wet oak leaves glistening under a slanting November sun.

"She's a true artist," Jenkins reflected, "—probably a Russian, or perhaps a Hungarian. Certainly no American or British person ever danced like that. In the abandon of that strange artistry spoke out the free spirit of a finely daring soul." And so little Miss Henrietta Brown was driven from his mind.

Mr. Jenkins had meant to watch during that next day in the post office, but it had abruptly become necessary to adapt the routine of his life to a new and great emotional experience. Accordingly he ran back to Chicago during the day to put his business house in order; and returned to spend the evening again at that vaudeville house.

After the performance, on the second evening of his great experience, Mr. Jenkins stood timidly, self-consciously, like a bewildered boy, with collar turned up and hat pulled down, in an alley doorway, and gazed out of a shining dream at a slim little person who wore an impenetrable veil and stepped into a closed motor-car only to be whisked off into the unfriendly night.

ENCHANTMENT

(from page 31)

ON a December evening in the city of Washington the Masked Dancer bounded off the stage and stood panting, behind draperies. With her dainty head poised slightly to one side, she listened to the roar of the applause from the great audience out beyond the footlights. Through the mask her nearly black eyes snapped with excitement. Her little hands were tightly clenched. It was, she felt, the great moment of her life; for out there, in his regular box, sat the dignified President of the United States, applauding happily. Time and again she returned to sink on her heel in a curtsy that was in itself a little feat in delicate acrobatic balancing.

At last an inexorable stage manager "blacked out" the lights and ordered the next act set. She turned her shoulders to the waiting maid, who drew a wrap about her. Then, in hurrying toward her dressing-room, she found her path blocked by the stout person of Mr. Gentle, and the delighted sparkle left her eyes.

"Just a minute, dear!" said he.

"Please let me by," she answered.

"No, I won't," he retorted. "Not yet! It's all right, this stuff—not speaking to me. You needn't think I care a damn—I'm not so crazy about you. But if it's getting so you won't even let me talk business with you, then what's the use o' my trying to do all this for you?"

He was raising his voice. She loathed him. She knew now he was drawing seven hundred and fifty dollars a week for the "act" that still paid her the "two hundred and a half" of the original agreement. She knew now that he lived by lying and thievery and parasitism.

"Well," she asked, to quiet him, "what is it?"

"That millionaire's here—sitting in the third—"

"Mr. Gentle, if you—"

"My dear, you got to listen! I'd like to know who you think you are, anyway! While you're about it, why don't you walk out front there and insult the President. You're too good to live! Here's this Chicago millionaire—I've looked him up, I tell you! He follows you to Indianapolis and Columbus and Akron and Detroit and Cleveland and Buffalo and Albany and Boston and—"

"I will not listen!"

"You gotta! In a minute you're going to hear what I've done about it."

Frightened, she stared away through the mask.

"He's made up to me. He's nutty about you. We had a talk today outside the theater. I tell you he's a real swell. He says you're too wonderful for this vaudeville game. Asked if you were married. Well, I asked if he wouldn't feel like putting up for a big show next year—play a Broadway house. And dearie, he jumped at it! We've got him hooked. But he says he's got to meet you. So I told him—"

"Mr. Gentle—"

"Now, just you go it easy, sweetheart! It's all right! I'm only bringing him up

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to your suite for a call at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning. I'll stay right in the room if you like."

WITH a breathless exclamation she rushed past him and ran up the stairs to her dressing-room. The rest of the evening was a fever, the night a worse than sleepless horror. She dreamed of contracts that were steel fetters on her ankles and wrists. She brooded crazily on ogres that pursued helpless girls. And at moments, wistfully, she remembered the glorious joy of her dancing.

She refused to see them, but knew they would come. She wore a tailored street suit of a texture and a mode rarely seen in Sunbury, and put on the hat with the heavy veil hanging about her face and head. Whoever he was, whatever his infatuation for the Masked Dancer, he was not to see Henrietta Brown. On that she was determined.

They did come—promptly. The maid announced them, with a respectfully shrewd glance:

"It's Mr. Gentle and that—gentleman."

Her heart sank. She desired nothing so much now as to give up her half-realized dream, which was at once so thrilling and so empty, and run away—back to the Sunbury public library. She leaned against the wall, hand on breast. Her depression deepened into something near despondency. . . . It wouldn't do. Breathless, miserable, she moved weakly into the parlor.

They stood by the window. They turned. Mr. Gentle, cigar clipped between fat fingers, hat in hand, moved forward with his oiliest smile. The other man turned expectantly. It was Mr. Jenkins.

During a brief moment Miss Brown swayed, fighting silently for breath. Then, without a sound, she fled into the bedroom and bolted the door.

Twenty minutes later the maid came in from the hall, through the other door, with a note.

"He's been sitting there, writing it," she explained.

But she neglected to explain about the five-dollar bill that was crumpled in her left hand.

Her fingers trembling, her eyes hardly focusing, Miss Brown read a straightforward proposal of marriage. He told her, with the frankness of an emotional boy, his name, his financial condition—more, indeed, than his neighbors in Sunbury would know until his will should be read to the expectant next of kin. And he didn't so much as know her name!

The effect on Miss Brown was that of utter panic.

Then Mr. Gentle was back, storming in past the maid, talking angrily around his cigar.

"So you think you can insult him like that, eh! Insult him, me, everybody! After all I've done for you! I won't speak of gratitude. God knows—"

She sat white and still, hands folded weakly in her lap.

"Well," he cried, "what you got to say for yourself?"

"Nothing." It was hardly more than a whisper.

"Nothing? Nothing?"

"Mr. Gentle, I'm going home."

"Going? When?"

"Today—now. You'll have to release me."

"But good Gawd!"

"What will you take to release me?"

"Dearie, don't talk crazy! I can't release you. How can I? We're all booked up. And we've got a fortune in sight—money—real hard money!"

"You could release me if I were ill."

"Well, sweetheart, but—"

"I am ill. I shall never appear in public again. I want the contract back. I'll pay you five hundred dollars for it. That's about all I—"

In the end the amazed Mr. Gentle had to accept her offer.

GEORGE C. and his wife sat with knit brows by the table that still bore the unwashed dinner-dishes. It was curiously difficult to speak.

Henrietta stood in the doorway, pale but otherwise natural, wearing an old brown dress and her last winter's topcoat and turban. If she had only given them warning, it would have been possible, perhaps, to frame an attitude. But as matters stood, they were helpless.

"I put my bag down in the hall upstairs," Henrietta was saying. "I'll unpack as soon as I get back from the library. They'll hardly have my trunk here before morning."

"Have you had anything to eat?" asked George C., sternly.

"I picked up a bite of supper in the Chicago station."

"But what are we to think?" cried Mrs. George C. "What—are—we—to—think?"

"It isn't that we don't appreciate all you've done," put in George C. "The money—but—"

"Suppose," remarked Henrietta quietly, but with a firmness about the mouth and a snap in the eyes, "suppose you just mind your own business. I've done nothing I'm ashamed of—nothing."

George C. hastened to reassure her:

"Of course we quite understand that!"

And his wife cried:

"But what can we say to people?"

"Suppose you just try keeping still?"

With which brisk remark little Miss Brown stepped out and sharply closed the front door.

As she left the discordant household behind, her spirits quietly and unaccountably rose. It was soothing to be again in the old town after those nightmare weeks in the theatrical madhouse. For the first time in many years—since her girlhood, indeed—she felt no restlessness. The snow creaked coldly, but oh, so pleasantly, under her light feet. The sharp breeze crinkled her nostrils. It was delightful to see Berger's grocery again, and the *Gleaner* offices lighted up over the meat-market, and Illingworth's drugstore with young people at the soda-fountain sipping hot chocolate from white porcelain cups. And the library building seemed to smile comfortably at her like an old friend who knew, and knowing, forgave much.

Miss Wombast, at the desk, greeted her with an embrace. Replying to her, "Have you a job for me?" Miss Wombast replied: "My dear, go right back into the office and hang up your things!"

Miss Brown demurely obeyed. How pleasantly familiar the office was, tucked

away here behind the stack! She fingered, pursing her lips, smiling faintly, while a touch of color stole into her cheeks.

From the bosom of her dress she drew a crumpled letter which she spread out on the desk and read slowly through.

Then, suddenly holding it aloft, she lifted one foot, spun up on her toes, whirled gayly, exuberantly, and then went dipping and spinning across the room.

At an extraordinary little gasp from the doorway, she came down flat on her feet. Mr. Jenkins stood there. His face was gray.

Both stared. Miss Brown felt her knees shaking.

He stepped into the room, and so nearly forgot himself as to push the door behind him.

The situation was saved momentarily by a sudden descent of the blessed spirit of mischief on Miss Brown.

"I'm sure you must have wanted your letter back," she murmured, and gave it to him. He accepted it in a daze. And she slipped out and joined Miss Wombast at the outer desk.

It was all of twenty minutes before he came out, and bowing stiffly, left the building.

It was excitingly pleasant—above all else so far on this delightful evening—to go about with Miss Wombast, putting the piles of returned books away, making out the postcard notices of overdue charges, switching off lights and locking up. Her impulse was to delay and linger, but she walked brightly home.

AT the foot of the front steps, however, she stopped short. One of the parlor shades had not been drawn quite down. A caller sat within. She tiptoed close and peeped. There he was—Mr. Jenkins, looking strangely grave, visiting with the Batties.

Her pulse fluttered. For a moment she clung to the porch railing; then she walked softly around to the garage and locked herself in. The air there was musty, but she dared not raise a shade. She turned on the desk-light, donned her black-rimmed spectacles, looked with alien eyes at her old piles of "work," unaware of the cold. . . . Then the knock came, and she had let him in. He was standing by the desk looking gravely down at her where she had sunk into the chair. His eyes burned in hollows.

"I can't accept this letter." This she caught and dimly understood. "It is yours. Again I offer it to you."

The room danced about her—the stove, the bookcases, the old talking-machine.

She heard herself saying:

"I'm too confused to talk. This is so—it's all strange—I've been through so much."

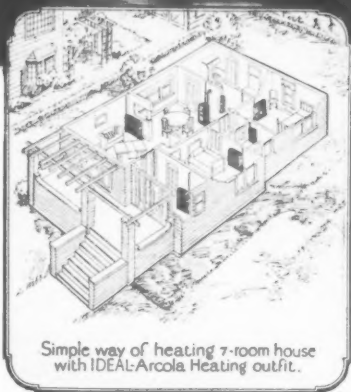
She heard him saying:

"I have been through everything. Out in that world I lost you. But now I find you here."

Then she: "I can't talk now!"

Her temples throbbed. Her eyes filled. How—how could they ever—he and she—find the possible bridge of words across the gulf of confusions that yawned between them.

Then her heart whispered brightly, wonderfully, that it knew a way.



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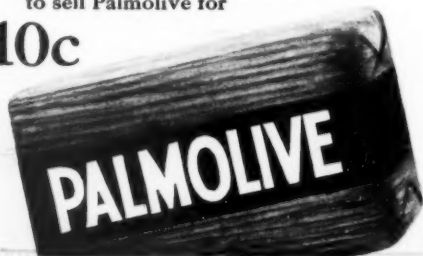
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finer. Palm and Olive oils, after 3,000 years, still hold their place as the most perfect of all natural cleansers.

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By William Allen Pusey, A. M., M. B. (Professor of Dermatology in the University of Illinois)

"No part of the body, except the hands, is so much exposed to extraneous dirt as the face, and because of abundant fat secretion no part of the body bears vigorous washing better. One sometimes encounters the superstition that washing the face is bad for the complexion and because of that belief try to get along with oils and creams as a substitute for soap and water. The layer of dirt and fat that such persons accumulate on the face is a poor makeshift for a clean, clear skin and a constant invitation to various disorders of the skin."

BEAUTY

(Continued from
page 75)

"Odd thing, Larrick! Our dear little girl's beauty is all there in that litter of ugly chunks. But the molds will give her back to us. They will give her back as endlessly as a mirror would give back her reflection. We could make a thousand statues of her. A colonnade of her statues, an army of caryatids supporting a long, long architrave—all those are there in that pile of rubbish!"

ALMOST unconsciously they withdrew from the cabin and closed the door upon the deed that had exhausted them both, a revolting obligation performed faithfully but with agony and remorse at its necessity. The sun was up now, and its rays played upon them with a kindness they needed. They felt hardly able to leave the cabin with no guard for Clelia, and they loitered at the door irresolute.

To clear his heart of its sickness, Randel fell to shop talk, as any man will who seeks an escape from unbearable experience. Larrick stood and listened perfectly for lack of strength to move away.

Larrick was ashamed to be unable to grasp the foreign language Randel spoke. His life in the desert had been artless almost altogether. He had read little fiction, seen few plays, no paintings or architecture worth mentioning, no important music. He had patronized only one art, and that so new an art that most of the critics were still pluming themselves on despising it—the moving picture.

"There's a terrible trouble, though," he interrupted. "You have Clelia's form in there, you say: but it can't move. It's frozen fast. You've taken the ice from her poor body; but you can never take it from your statue."

"So it will never be Clelia, for Clelia was always on the move. Never was there anybody who was so restless and so limber and so—like quicksilver."

"Your statue will show her in one position with her eyes shut and her hands praying to the beast that killed her. But nobody ever saw Clelia like that—except one man, the man we've got to find."

"Why don't you make a thousand statues of her, running, dancing, diving, swimming, riding a horse over a stone fence, laughing, poking fun at everybody, paddling a canoe? Why don't you make a statue that can move, not like a doll with hinges for joints but like Clelia when she was Clelia. Why don't you do that? Then you'd have a real monument! Then you could say you really had saved Clelia's beauty, for half her beauty was her speed."

Randel smiled indulgently: "I'm not God, my boy, and I can't do the impossible."

"Take that figure of Clelia that we have made: If it is ever exhibited, it will be met with a storm of abuse. Nobody will give me any credit for it—or you, whose idea it was. And why not? First because it is unexpected, therefore unpardonable. Next, because I didn't do the work free-

handedly. What hopeless fools the critics are! Of course, we are all critics and all fools. But what poor damned fools we all are, all of us trying to keep from admiring too many things!

"We all think that the less we like, the wiser we are! The critic who despises the most of the works of God and man is the one who calls himself the most learned. As a matter of fact, or course, he is the least learned, the narrowest, self-denyingest blind fool of the lot. How beautiful Clelia was—is!—how beautiful she shall be forever—thanks to us! And yet they won't give her image the name of art. Art! What a word of abuse and misuse and insanity!"

His talk meant little to Larrick, who was blissfully ignorant of the caldrons of vitriol that are always bubbling and squeaking in the various realms of art for the blistering of everybody—vitriol for the conservatives to throw at the radicals, vitriol for the radicals to throw back, vitriol for the realists and romanticists to exchange, vitriol for the new school that shall become old, to cast upon the old that once was new.

"The critics are always wrong, always were, always will be," Randel cried. "After all, why isn't this statue of Clelia art? A kind of original work? Most of the great sculptors have taken accurate and minute measurements of their models with tapes and calipers, and merely transferred them to the clay. Some eminent men have been accused of taking just such casts of living models as I am doing now."

"The one great thing is that we have given the world a perfect form in its perfection, truth in its truth. What does it matter whether they call us artists or molders or vandals? Then, we must always remember that sculpture itself was once an accursed and forbidden art. The human form being in God's likeness was not to be made into images. For several hundred years it was against the Christian law."

"Vandals is the word a lot of good people will call us when they find out what we have done. Clelia's mother and father will want to kill me, probably."

"Perhaps it would be wiser not to tell anyone what we have done until the time is ripe. As I said before, it may be a prison offense. A thousand detectives, though, might look at those molds and never suspect what they contain. Still, for the present, I think we had best not mention the matter."

Larrick said: "If there's any trouble, I'll take the blame. It was my idea."

RANDEL put his hand on Larrick's shoulder. "That's like you, to claim nothing but the penalty. But the blame must go with the glory. The demand was yours, but I supplied it. After all, what have we stolen, but the impress of Clelia's form."

"And what is form? What is anything without it? We have taken Clelia's form, and left it with her. We have robbed

nobody; yet we have enriched the world. I'd be glad to go to jail for such a crime. The judge could only sentence me to immortality, and what wouldn't I sacrifice for that? Still, we'd best keep our secret while we may."

The roving discourse had rested them somewhat from raw fact. They were exhausted with theory and were drawn irresistibly back to the cabin.

And now Clelia lay before them, no longer a splendor of grace in a shroud of glass, but a poor little girl that was no longer to be spoken to or listened to. She was there before them; yet she was inconceivably absent.

Larrick clutched at Randel's shoulder for support and cried:

"I can't have her dead, Randel. I won't have Clelia dead. I don't want to live in a world where so sweet a flower can be so—" As his grief throttled him, the door opened and Nancy Fleet stepped in.

CHAPTER XLV

LARRICK had been so absorbed in the thought of womanly form in ice or marble immobile eternally, that his first surprise when Nancy Fleet appeared, quick, anxious, alert, was at the miracle of her being alive at all, being able to move, step, speak, lift her hand, her eyelids, be curious about anything human.

He had almost come to think in these few hours in this lonely, snow-smothered camp that womankind had ended with Clelia. Yet another woman stood on the threshold, as keen and beautiful and capable of joy and pain as if Clelia had never died. Life was going on; people were going about in spite of this tragedy that ought to have stopped the world.

Nancy Fleet, peering into the cabin, was a little blinded from the glitter of the snow outside, and saw only the two men standing together. She gasped: "Did you know that Clelia had vanished?"

"Yes," said Randel, "We brought her here."

"Thank God!" Nancy gasped, and slipping about the cabin, dropped to the first chair.

Randel saw that the secret was already at the mercy of the first comer. He frowned and pointed to the figure shrouded on the wood.

Nancy took a step forward, then fell back and confronted Randel again:

"You've taken the ice from her! But how did you dare? And all this plaster, this—those things on the floor: they're molds, aren't they? Randel! You haven't—you didn't? You did, you would! You're merciless in your art. And Mr. Larrick helped you. Why did you drag him into this—this blasphemy?"

Randel wavered for a reply between shame and pride, but Larrick broke in:

"It was my idea, Nancy. Mr. Randel only carried it out."

There was a womanly, almost a motherly fanaticism in Nancy's panic for Larrick's welfare.



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"But what on earth were you thinking of? The risk you ran is frightful. The police will ask what you were trying to conceal. They are coming now. I saw from the porch Jeffers' wagon and two or three sleighs breaking their way through the snow on the mountain road. They'll be here in a few minutes, and they'll ask a thousand questions. Oh, why, oh, why, couldn't you have let her alone?"

Larrick, marveling at Nancy's concern for him, felt it cruelly impossible to tell her that he had been infatuated with Clelia's beauty and that he preferred any profanation to its loss. He could not bludgeon her so.

RANDEL now came to his rescue. He took Nancy's hands in his and said: "Larrick's only share of the blame is this: he said yesterday that it seemed a pity there was no portrait of Clelia. She was like a statue, and he thought there ought to be a statue of her. I worried about it all night, and this morning I woke him and asked him to help me take a cast of her. That is what we have done."

Nancy shuddered: "Oh, I can understand you. You would sacrifice anything to your sculpture. But you hadn't Clelia's consent, or her father's or Mrs. Roantree's, or the law's consent. It would have been terrible enough if Clelia had simply died, but the poor child belongs to the police now. And what want they imagine? And the newspapers, what want they do with it? They'll make you famous at last, Randel!"

"Infamous," he groaned. "But—art has its martyrs no less than religion, Nancy. Painters and sculptors and playwrights and novelists have been persecuted and jailed and covered with shame when they were simply letting their light shine in the dark world. It was always so, and I'll take my medicine, whatever it is. My heart is as pure as Savonarola's or Saint Cecilia's and my religion as sincere. But at all costs we mustn't let the law rob us of this work of art. Clelia's body belongs to her parents and to the law and then to the grave, but her beauty belongs to the ages, and I thank God we've saved it. I count on you to help us."

Nancy nodded: "You're dragging me in as an accomplice. Oh, well, I always was a fool; I'll do what I can." She turned on Larrick a look of meek understanding and humility before Clelia's power over him. Then she set her wits to work on a conspiracy against the curiosity of the world. As she meditated fiercely, Randel said:

"Perhaps we'd better take Clelia back to the house."

"No," said Nancy, "they'd trace the marks of the dragging of the ice here, and your footprints, as I did. Let's take the plaster molds and hide them somewhere—in the snow, perhaps."

Randel shook his head. "No, they're still wet; they'd freeze and crack and be distorted."

"Then take them to my room and cover them with blankets," Nancy said. "We must hurry before Mrs. Roantree comes out."

And this they did. Nancy's room was in a corner at a distance from Mrs. Roantree's. They carried the casts to her

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These are times when they are looking for a tire that will *lower* their tire cost—that will deliver *economy*, tire after tire and *keep on* delivering it year in and year out.

* * *

And they are expecting more of dealers.

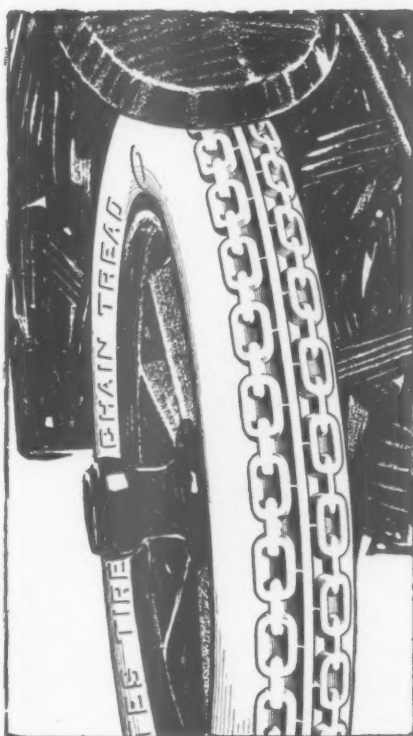
They are taking their business to the man who understands their tire problems, and who sells the kind of tires that will *solve* these problems.

Now, a careful buyer is quick to see that the dealer who carries a mixture of tires *cannot* be expected to speak with conviction or authority about any *one* of them. His loyalty is divided. His responsibility not yet fixed.

* * *

The merchant who carries *one full complete* line of tires is a man who proves to his community that he *believes* in his goods.

He is the real tire author-



THE U. S. CHAIN TREAD

One of the few tires of which it may be said that they deliver economy year in and year out and tire after tire. The U. S. guarantee is for the life of the tire and not for any limited number of miles.

The U. S. Chain Tread gives sufficient traction on all ordinary road surfaces. It is probably the handsomest, and by all odds the most popular, of the whole U. S. Fabric Tire line.

ity, who invites public confidence, because he is thinking always of each individual car owner's interest—not of some part of his stock that he wants to get rid of.

These men are the pioneers of the new order in the retail tire business. It is for them that the United States Rubber Company created a complete line of tires on which they can stake their reputation—concentrating their efforts to the great advantage of everybody.

* * *

The real tire merchant knows that the complete concentrated line of tires is his one sure protection against loading up with a multiplicity of brands and the dangers of over-stocking.

For the first time, he finds his stock investment down to a safe and reasonable basis. He now has a stock that can be moved quickly, and his customers are always sure of a *fresh* and current supply of tires.

These are the tire merchants who are thinking of *your* interest first. Think of them when it comes to your tires.

United States Tires

United States Rubber Company



Fifty-three
Factories

The Oldest and Largest
Rubber Organization in the World

Two hundred and
thirty-five Branches



Needless repairing! Every week the lady of the house has to spend some of her time sewing on buttons and repairing button holes that have been damaged in the laundry. In families where the Hatch One Button Union Suit is worn, all this trouble is saved, in so far as the underwear is concerned. There's only one button, seldom in need of attention, instead of a whole row to look after.

CHANGING TO SPRING UNDERWEAR

WHEN you change from winter underwear to the lighter weights this spring, you are doing it for the sake of comfort. Why not be sure of comfort in fit as well as weight? There is just one union suit that will give you this perfect comfort. It is the union suit with just *one* button—the



This Spring you can get the Hatch One Button Union Suit in the finest of knit goods and nainsook. We shall be glad to send, free on request, a catalog describing the complete line.

The Hatch One Button Union Suit is featured at the best stores everywhere, but if you cannot get it easily and quickly, send your size with remittance to our mill at Albany, N. Y., and you will be supplied direct, delivery free.

Men's garments:

Knitted—\$1.50, \$2.00, \$2.50 and \$3.00. Nainsook—\$1.00, \$1.50, \$1.75, \$2.00 and \$2.50.

Boys' garments:

Knitted—\$1.25.
Nainsook—75 cents.

HATCH ONE BUTTON UNION SUIT

Because it eliminates the useless row of buttons up and down the front, which pull the edges and wrinkle the surface, it lets your body enjoy the full benefit of the garment's skilful fashioning.

FULD & HATCH KNITTING CO.
ALBANY NEW YORK

window, and she lifted them in and piled them in a closet.

They had made the last of the journeys just before Jeffers and his convoy drove in, their snow-matted horses exhausted by the plunging combat with the roads.

In fact, Nancy had been inspired to set Berthe, the maid, to the task of preparing a great quantity of coffee. And she herself was buttering biscuits and preparing the best breakfast she could from such supplies as had been stored in the larder.

The invaders from the other side of the storm were so needful of coffee that they regarded the household with the kindest prejudice. And when Mrs. Roantree appeared like a belated queen to take command, and brought forth a supply of whisky, the sheriff and his company felt rather like waifs rescued than like avenging officers.

Besides, Jeffers and the chauffeur had told them enough to relieve anyone in the camp of suspicion. Jeffers had not meant to bring along so many outsiders. But, as he explained to Mrs. Roantree, the station-agent, who took and sent the telegrams Mrs. Roantree had written to apprise Clelia's mother and father of the tragedy, had said that the sheriff must be told. The undertaker, whom Jeffers visited for the coffin, would not keep the secret.

Before Jeffers could get out of the village, the sheriff had stopped him. And the local newspaper man, correspondent of a press bureau, had listened to all the sheriff's questions and Jeffers' answers. This man had hastened to send a long dispatch to the newspapers.

Clelia's name was now no doubt being set up in the biggest type in thousands of offices. Her story re-garbled in every version, was no doubt being sold to millions of eager shoppers for sensation.

MRS. Roantree turned on the correspondent, Ira Madsen, in a fury of horror. The young man had hitherto been known to her as a village news-terrier very grateful for any crumbs or "society items," as he called them, that she would brush from her table about her distinguished visitors. But now he had a dignity of a new sort.

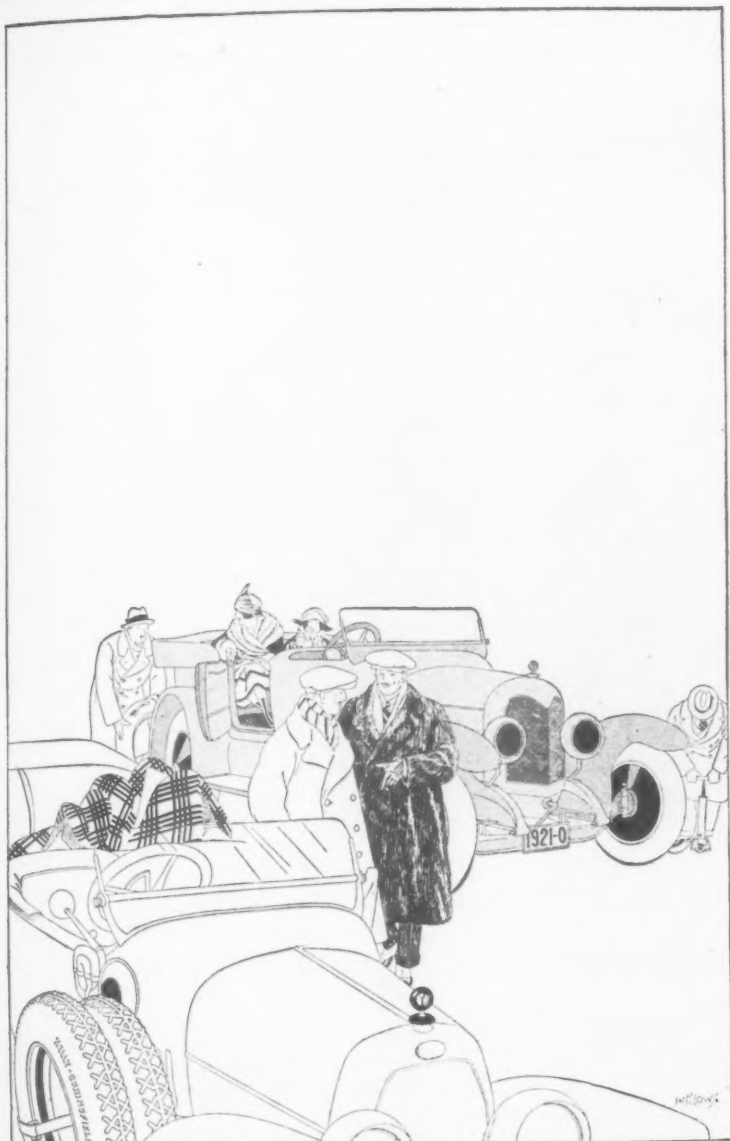
He answered her without homage. The reporter is the one autocrat left who fears no one and is feared by everyone. He spoke of his duty. And indeed he had his own religion, the news. He was as sincere in it and as ruthless as the priest of any other cult. He put Mrs. Roantree in her place in a few words the insolence of which stunned her.

Sheriff Brummit rebuked Madsen. Brummit kept a store in the village and needed Mrs. Roantree's trade. Sheriff Brummit thundered with all his thunder: "Look a-here, young feller, who'd you think you're talking to? I'd have you know—"

But the reporter was not even afraid of the police. The police fear the reporter nowadays above all powers of darkness, for every reporter feels himself *ex officio* a detective and has a horde of readers at his back. Madsen flashed back:

"I'd have you know that I represent the newspaper readers of America, and

(Continued on page 114)



\$250.00 Prize Contest

This picture is an advertising illustration. It is similar to the pictures that have been used in like advertisements during the past year. Do you know what well-known product it advertises? If you do, you may win \$250.00.

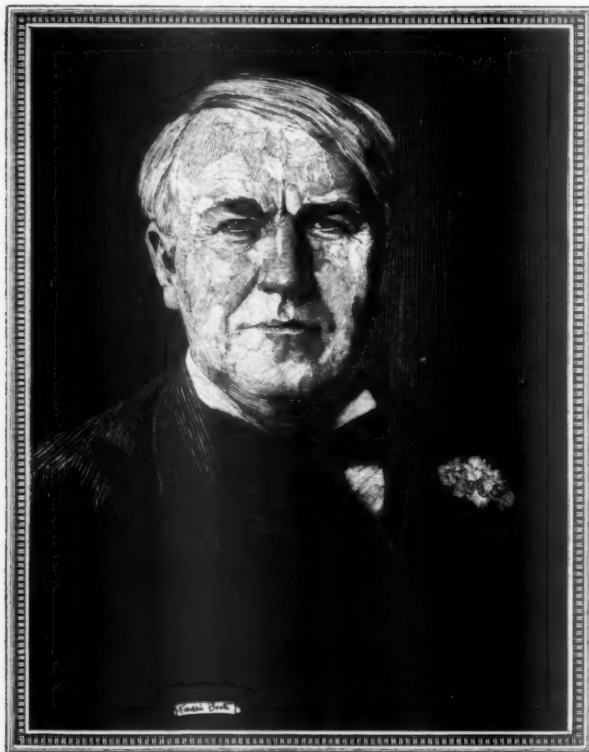
Read the Conditions Below

TO complete this advertisement, we need a dialogue or monologue of not over 35 words which will represent the conversation of the characters in the picture and will bring out some desirable feature of the product advertised.

What are the people in this picture saying? For the most apt and most cleverly worded dialogue or monologue that completes this advertisement and that is submitted to us by May 15, 1921, we will pay \$250.

Anyone may enter this contest except professional advertising writers. Should the winning advertisement be submitted in identical wording by more than one person, each will be paid \$250. The prize-winning answer, together with the name and address of the winner, will appear in the September issue of this magazine. However, a check will be mailed to the winner as soon as the contest can be decided.

CONTEST EDITOR, 16th Floor, 150 Madison Ave., New York



An Interview with Thomas A. Edison regarding the imperfections of the human voice

[Introductory Note.]—The realism of the New Edison is so perfect that this wonderful instrument brings the full benefits of music into every home.

In this interview, Mr. Edison explains, in his characteristic way, why this perfect realism causes him to be exceedingly careful in his selection of artists.

Mr. Edison also makes plain that the New Edison (in addition to RE-CREATING music in conjunction with Edison RE-CREATIONS) plays the talking machine records of all the principal talking machine manufacturers. The

New Edison lends improved tone quality to these talking machine records. If you have a favorite artist, who does not record for the Edison Laboratories, you should certainly hear him on the New Edison.

Some five hundred Edison dealers have equipped themselves with Turn-Tables, on which they have placed the New Edison and various well-known talking machines. This Turn-Table permits each instrument to be played in the same position, in the same room, so that an absolutely scientific comparison can be made.

"THE object of an inventor, attempting to produce a phonograph, should be to achieve the highest possible degree of realism. That has constantly been my goal, and, as is now well known, we have succeeded to a point where our phonograph reproduces, or RE-CREATES, the human voice and other forms of music, with such fidelity to the original that the most sensitive ears are unable to distinguish any difference. Our success in registering and emitting every quality of the human voice has revealed some rather remarkable facts.

"I have collected, through my agents in Europe and America, phonographic voice trials by approximately 3800 singers. Of these, there are but 22 who sing pure notes, without extraneous sounds and the almost universal tremolo effect. A singer's trill is quite a different thing from a tremolo. A trill can be and is controlled by the brain, but a tremolo is not within brain control and, so far, there has been no means found for correcting it. Most singers cannot sustain a note, without breaking it up into a series of chatterings, or tremolos. The number of waves varies

from two per second to as high as twelve. When at the latter rate, the chatter can just be heard and is not particularly objectionable. When at a slower rate, it is very objectionable.

Patti Had Pure Notes

"If this defect could be eliminated, nothing would exceed the beauty of the human voice, but, until this is done, there will be only a few singers in a century, who can emit pure notes in all registers. Patti, for example, was conspicuous for emitting pure notes, except in the lower part of her scale, and she was always reluctant to sing a song requiring the use of her lower register.

"The ordinary talking machine gives so incomplete and imperfect a reproduction of a singer's voice that the natural defects of such voice become relatively unimportant, because the defects in the talking machine are so much greater than the defects in the singer's voice. However, in the case of our phonograph, the defects in a singer's voice become very apparent, because we reveal his voice, exactly as it is. Our phonograph applies the acid test to the human voice. There are no realistic stage settings and no dramatic action to key our emotions to a pitch that renders us tolerant of imperfect singing. The impressive stage appearance and histrionic ability of the artist are lost upon us because we cannot see him.

Opera Artists in Concert

"The opera artist has somewhat the same problem when he appears in concert work. Lacking the stage picture and trappings of the opera, the grand opera star frequently fails on the concert platform, because of vocal defects, which are obscured in his appearances on the opera stage. Needless to say, the test, which our new phonograph imposes, is many times more severe than that of concert work.

"The emotional effects and consequent benefits of music are well known. Through the agency of our new phonograph, and because of its realism, I can produce the same effects as would result from the original music, provided I use artists, who emit pure tones and have artistic potentialities, which are fully felt by the listener, even though he does not see the artists.

"I instruct my agents, when listening to an artist, in opera or concert, to close their eyes, in order to approximate as nearly as possible the conditions under which the phonograph will be heard.

No Truly Perfect Voice

"The foregoing will, I think, make plain why I am unwilling to let an artist do serious work for my new phonograph, unless his voice is free from objectionable defects. I have not as yet encountered the truly perfect voice, but I endeavor to obtain voices that are as nearly perfect as possible; and, no matter how great an artist's reputation may be, I will not record him if his voice is below my standards.

"Even artists, whose voices meet my standards, frequently are not in sufficiently good voice to sustain the acid test of our phonograph. The fact that an artist is in good enough voice to appear in opera or concert, without evoking criticism, does not necessarily signify that our phonograph will not reveal that he is actually in poor voice. We cancel many recording dates for this cause. I believe this practice is unusual elsewhere. The reason for this is obvious, since, if the reproduction is inadequate and imperfect, voice defects, due, for example, to a cold, are not likely to be detected in the reproduction.

Admires Stage Personality

"I wish most emphatically to say that I have every admiration for the peculiar gifts of the singer, whose stage presence, or physical charm, enables him, or her, to achieve a great reputation, despite the handicap of an inferior voice, but I hope no one will expect me to record such voices. I realize that there is a certain amount of historic interest in collecting—much as one collects mementos for a memory book—the records of celebrated artists, irrespective of whether their records are truly agreeable to the ear, and I am very glad that the records of all the principal talking machine companies can be played on the New Edison, with the best possible results. Anyone, desiring the talking machine records of artists, who do not make recordings for me, will find that such records (unless they contain extraordinary faults) are given increased musical value by our new phonograph."

Of 3800 singers,
only 22 sing
pure notes,
says Mr. Edison

The NEW EDISON
"the phonograph with a soul"



Your Ready Helpers

There was no such meal-time help as the N.B.C. pantry shelf in grandmother's day. That meant many a hot hour spent in the kitchen with batter and bowl and rolling pin.

Today, what a difference! The selection of a few packages of various National Biscuit Company bakery foods, and the pantry is well supplied for many meal-times. That means a great saving of time to the efficient home-keeper—not forgetting the great appeal these delicious products make to every member of the family, plus their wholesome nourishing quality.

Keep a supply of these daily table staples in your pantry, and note the many advantages.

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY



(Continued from page 110)

they got a right to have the truth, no matter who it hurts. The bigger they are, the harder they fall, and that goes for sheriffs and society leaders."

Mrs. Roantree's eyes flashed. She began: "Well of all the imp—"

BUT Nancy Fleet led her aside, begging her not to waste her strength on such whippersnappers, and got her to her room. Then she returned and invited questions of every sort, melting Archimedes with such a smile that his terrible lever turned to a liquorice stick. She answered questions before they could be asked, and in her own way. Larrick was amazed by her darting ingenuity. She parried a dangerous blow before it could be started and diverted suspicion to a harmless byway before it could interest itself in any dangerous path.

Nancy told of Clelia's disappearance, the hunt for her, of her own return from the station (she fumbled her motives a little here), the wild anxiety of everyone. She told of Mr. Larrick's excursions into the blizzard, of how she herself had happened to save him when he was lost, of Mr. Larrick's final discovery of Clelia frozen in the lake, of the removal of the ice-block, and of the dispatch of Jeffers to town with messages.

All this Jeffers and the chauffeur had already told. But they had also said that Clelia's body would be found in the ice.

The sheriff and the reporter were more interested in learning why it had been removed. While Randel and Larrick faltered, Nancy took refuge in emotion:

"We just couldn't stand it! She was so sweet, so darling. It was unbearable, that the pretty child should be left there any longer! So we took the ice from her."

"Where is she now?"

"In Mr. Randel's cabin."

"We'll go there," said the reporter before Brummit could say it.

Randel explained, and the marks in the snow confirmed, the difficulty of carrying the ice, the fall and the partial breaking, and the care with which he and Larrick had lifted the fragments away.

When they entered the cabin, the still presence of the figure in the gay tapestries silenced them a moment. The reporter hurried forward to lift the shroud. The Sheriff stopped him and flung him back.

"Just a minute, Mr. Madsen. This is my job, I guess."

He drew down the cloth grimly, and fell back before the white face and the hands in prayer. He was a father himself, and he winced at the scar in the girl's brow. He was a father, and he felt no inclination to expose the girl to closer examination. But the reporter on tiptoe peering over the sheriff's shoulder kept asking questions, and trying to drag the covering off. Larrick would have knocked him down, if Nancy had not seized his hand and led him to the door, thrust him out and begged him to keep away.

Sheriff Brummit ordered Madsen not to touch Clelia and threatened to arrest him if he did. So Madsen turned his attention to the cabin. He noted the blotches of plaster and asked about them.

Nancy was glib with explanation.

"Mr. Randel is a famous sculptor. This is his studio. He was working on some

Endurance

the outstanding feature that makes this battery outlive its written guarantee of 1½ years



EVEREADY STORAGE BATTERY

AMERICAN EVER READY WORKS of National Carbon Co., Inc.

Service Stations Everywhere LONG ISLAND CITY, NEW YORK Service Stations Everywhere

Atlanta Chicago National Carbon Co., Inc., San Francisco, California

Insist on Eveready Flashlights and Batteries. Miniature Mazda Lamps, Dry Batteries, and Meters

They Earn the Money



Photograph copyright by
Bachrach.

The girl at the left started her business career as a stenographer: now she's an important executive in a big firm.



As head of a business school, the young woman above holds a position well worth having.

Did you know that railroad work offers a fine field for women? At the right is a railroad woman in uniform.



THESE women have each won an assured status in the business or professional world. You may read their stories—along with many others, many articles of timely interest to all business women and many really recreative fiction features—in the April issue of—

The Green Book Magazine

Now On Sale

The Consolidated Magazines Corporation,
Publisher,
36 South State Street, Chicago, Ill.

LABLACHE FACE POWDER

Standard for 50 years, and never excelled, Lablache is a safe powder for the complexion. Millions of fastidious women use it. It is the powder of undisputed refinement and stylish to use. Always sold in the plain old fashioned box.

Refuse Substitutes

They may be dangerous. Flesh, White, Pink or Cream. Use a box of drugist or by mail. Over two million boxes sold annually. Send 10c for a sample box.

BEN. LEVY CO.
French Perfumers, Dept. 8
125 Kingston St., Boston, Mass.



YOU have no more important problem than the choice of the best school for your children. Upon request The Red Book Magazine's Educational Bureau, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, will be glad to furnish you valuable information on this vital subject.

LAW IN YOUR SPARE TIME AT HOME For BUSINESS For PROFESSION

Conferred Study law with only Institution which gives same Course by Correspondence through Lecture System as was given for years at resident classes of this College. Business today demands a knowledge of law for those who want success. Big opportunities in the legal profession. We coach you free to pass Bar Examination in any State. Special consultation privileges. Complete 24-volume library (12 books) specially prepared by leading professional and law-trained business men. Organized 1910. Low enrollment fee, easy terms. Write for Free Illustrated Book.

HAMILTON COLLEGE OF LAW, 764 Morton Bldg., Chicago

statuary. He brought—we brought—her here, because it seemed better than the house—a better place for Mr. Hingeley" (Mr. Hingeley was the undertaker) "to prepare the poor child for—for— Mrs. Roantree is really at the breaking point."

"I understand, ma'am," said the Sheriff, and Mr. Hingeley bowed ponderously.

The correspondent, however, interposed a barrier: "But nothing must be done before a careful examination of the—the —before a careful examination. There may have to be chemical and microscopic tests, and probably the poor young lady's father will insist on some of the great New York detectives studying the case for clues."

Nancy winced. She was hard put to it to keep from screaming what she murmured: "Speaking of clues, Mr. Sheriff, don't you think you ought to see where the body was found."

"That's a good idea. I was thinking of that," said Mr. Brummit, and moved to the door.

Madsen was torn between a desire to be left alone with the "mystery" and a fear that the Sheriff might find some clue at the lake's edge and not tell him of it. The jealousy between the two branches of modern government, the law and the newspaper, is increasingly bitter.

"We ought to leave somebody on guard here," said Madsen, and Brummit agreed with him for once.

"That's a good idea. I was just thinking of it. You stay, Hingeley."

THE undertaker was willing. He was a man of heavy make and no fancier of slippery paths or cold weather.

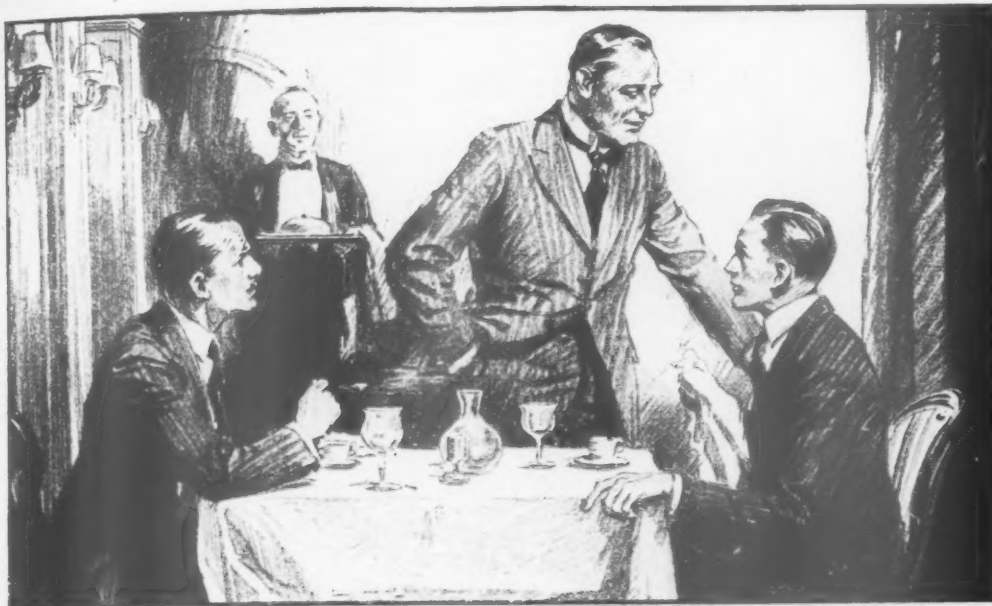
Brummit put him in charge and gave him the highly needless caution not to touch "anything." Hingeley murmured that he was "in no hurry." And before the others were out of the cabin, he had pulled up a chair, fetched from his pockets a cigar and a matchbox, and a bundle of comic supplements, and was smiling already through the flame of his match at the daily picture of "The Gumps" exchanging household repartee.

Nancy, clutching her furs about her, clung to Larrick's arm and to Randel's, forcing them against their will to come along. Brummit and Madsen, Jeffers and the chauffeur followed across the snow, under the pines and down a slope crusted with sparkling ice until all the world seemed to be covered with cake-frosting. Burnley the painter, who had only now come out, joined the company.

A light and humorous breeze scampered across the blizzard's battlefield, and played with a few dead leaves that it tore from the snow. Among the rusty spinners Larrick noted something bright and blue and crimson. It might be an orchid or a huge butterfly.

The breeze ran with it, checked and spun it, skirled and whipped it along. Larrick ran forward and bent like a short-stop picking up a grounder. When he lifted his hand, he found in it a little silken slipper, heelless, brilliant, soft in spite of the cold.

His heart rocked with pain. He was afraid to speak or to think. He brought it to Nancy, holding it out without speaking. She glanced at it and nodded, groaning.



"Without it, no matter how much food we eat, we are slowly starving our vital tissues"

The new mysterious factor in food

Science discovers the lack of one vital element in our food

Laxatives gradually replaced by this simple food

Ordinary laxatives are of three kinds: coarse substances that may injure the sensitive intestines; oils that merely lubricate; drugs that may form a habit.

Fleischmann's Yeast is a food—a conditioner that tends to restore the normal action of the bowels. And it cannot form a habit.

To help the body eliminate waste, take from 1 to 3 cakes of Fleischmann's Yeast a day.

For "run-down" condition

How many of us are "not quite fit" morning after morning! How many grow "tired out" easily—lack the full vigor needed for the day's duties and pleasures! For such men and women Fleischmann's Yeast is being prescribed. When "run-down" eat 1 to 3 cakes every day. In acute cases always visit your doctor.

ACERTAIN mysterious element in food called *vitamine*! Science has established that our store of energy and even health itself depend upon it.

Without it, no matter how much food we eat, we are slowly starving the vital tissues upon which we must rely for our strength.

Primitive man secured an abundance of *vitamine* from his raw foods and green leafy vegetables. But modern diet, refined and modified, has often been deprived of much of the water-soluble *vitamine*. One of America's most eminent physiological chemists says: "Long continued . . . general debility follows the continued ingestion of food containing too little of this *vitamine*."

The richest source of this life-giving *vitamine*, it has been discovered, is—yeast!

To get enough of this *vitamine* so essential to health, thousands

are already eating Fleischmann's Yeast.

Fleischmann's Yeast assures new stores of health and energy, and brings back a vigor unknown for years.

Physicians and hospitals are prescribing it to stimulate the appetite, help digestion and gradually take the place of laxatives.

A simple food—rich in this almost magic element

Eat Fleischmann's Yeast before or between meals—from 1 to 3 cakes a day. Nibble it from the cake or spread it with butter on crackers, toast or bread.

Only one precaution: if troubled with gas dissolve yeast first in boiling water.

To learn many interesting facts about the health-giving properties of Fleischmann's Yeast, fill out the coupon below and send for the booklet on this subject.

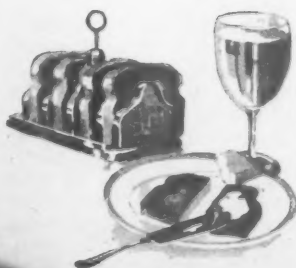
Place a standing order with your grocer for Fleischmann's Yeast and get it delivered fresh every day!

THE FLEISCHMANN COMPANY, Dept. L-30
701 Washington St., New York, N. Y.

THE FLEISCHMANN COMPANY, Dept. L-30
701 Washington St., New York, N. Y.

Send me without cost a copy of your new book, "The New Importance of Yeast in Diet."

My Name
Street
City
State





Don't hide a poor complexion— overcome the defects.

The resort to cosmetics to *cover up* complexion defects is a hopeless task. Face powders and creams have their proper use—but it is not to *hide* an ugly, rough, blotchy appearance.

Underneath most unattractive skins is a clear, pleasing complexion. Begin today the following Resinol treatment to clear away the blemishes and bring out the hidden beauty. Bathe your face with Resinol Soap and warm water—working the rich lather gently into the pores with the finger tips. Wash off with more Resinol Soap and warm water, then rinse thoroughly with gradually cooler water. Finish with a dash of cold to close the pores. Do this once or twice a day and note the glow of returning health. Resinol Soap is for sale wherever toilet goods are sold. Buy a cake today.

Address RESINOL, Dept. 1-C, Baltimore, Md.,
for dainty trial size cake, free.

Resinol Soap



"It's one of Clelia's bedroom slippers." And she explained to the Sheriff. "She had them on when she left her room, for this is the only one that has been found."

Madsen thrust out for it, but Larrick gave him the heel of his hand in the chest and almost flung him over. They stood and regarded it dumbly. It was like the sandal of a slain goddess. It was an emblem of Clelia's own light scampering soul.

They moved on, saddened, and all of them watching for the other slipper. They expected to see it running across the snow as its mate had done. But when they found it at last, it was caught in a little bush at the foot of the rock by the great tree where Larrick had found Clelia in the lake. He held the two slippers in his hand against his heart while they paused and considered the bleak region.

The glare of shore and lake, the shiver in the pine needles, the absence of everything warm and gracious made the little red and blue patterns of Chinese silk strangely incongruous. It was hard to believe that not many days had passed since the lake and the banks were filled with cheer and with tender warmth. There before them, easily discernible in the older ice, was the new ice that had filled the place of the block, which had been cut out and hauled ashore with oxen.

THE Sheriff's theory was that Miss Clelia had been dragged here, beaten to death and flung off the rock into the deep water. The newspaper man felt that she had rather been lured. In the first place, if she had been dragged, her slippers would have been torn off near the house and would show signs of struggle. In the second place, he dearly loved the word *lured*.

The Sheriff growled: "How could anybody loor a nice young lady like she was out here in her nightgown?"

"Well, she was out here, wasn't she?" Madsen demanded. "She came out here, didn't she? I tell you she was loored."

Brummit had to admit that Clelia had left the house in her nightgown and that was as hard for his village mind to explain as the motive any man should have for destroying so pretty a thing once she had come there.

This was easy for Madsen. He said:

"Some fiend got her. We'll have to examine the body to see if there are any marks of violence."

Nancy Fleet checked Larrick's desire to put marks of violence on the man whose profession was inquisitiveness. She said:

"We all saw Clelia plainly through the ice, Mr. Madsen. There were no marks upon her, except the cut in her forehead. Her feet were bare and unbruised. Her hands were clasped in prayer, and they were not bruised."

As they all moved slowly up a slant of the glassy declivity, Larrick remembered Hingeley and foresaw with a nausea of revulsion all the further treatment that awaited the poor girl.

He wrung his hands in anguish and cast his eyes upward in a protest to heaven. His eyes caught a black wing of smoke fluttering above the pines. Then he saw the red plumage of lofty flames leaping into the black.

The others saw at the same moment



Don't ask fool Questions!

Every man who ever smoked Velvet in his pipe knows why a fellow sticks to it.

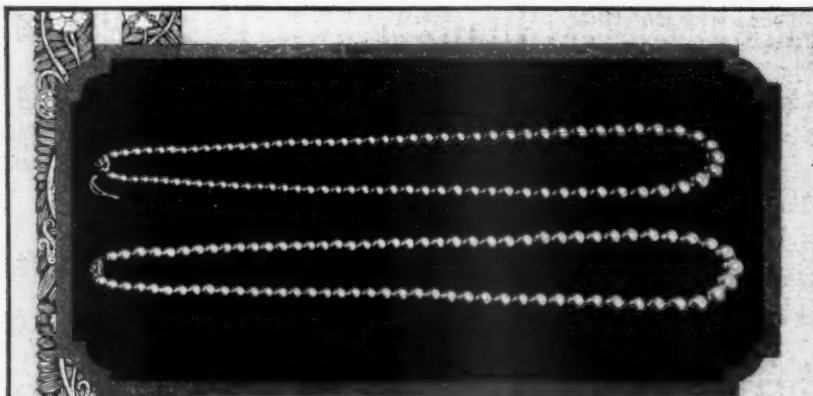
Velvet is crammed full of the natural goodness of Kentucky's finest Burley tobacco, aged two years in wooden hogsheads. Nothing harsh or "bitey"—just mild and mellow.

You, too, will like this tobacco—aged in the wood for two years—nothing like it.

LIGGETT & MYERS TOBACCO CO.

America's smoothest smoke





The lower necklace is a costly Oriental strand; the other is its Deltah Pearls reproduction, Necklace Gioconda. The photograph has not been retouched.

Make this Interesting Comparison with a Necklace of Deltah Pearls

Ask your jeweler to show you a strand of natural pearls. Place a quality necklace of Deltah Pearls by its side.

The first thing that will strike you is the harmony of these two lustrous necklaces. But try to distinguish between them and you will find the gold Deltah tag a welcome aid.

Observe, above all, how Heller artistry has succeeded in avoiding in Deltah Pearls most of those marked defects which many Oriental pearls show.

You will reflect on the elegance and perfection of a Deltah Necklace before purchasing any strand of pearls.

DELTAH PEARLS, in distinctive cases of Royal Purple, with gold or platinum clasps, are ready for your inspection at jewelry shops. There are seventeen qualities, ranging from \$10 to \$300 the Necklace. A valuable booklet will be sent on request to Heller, Dept. D2, 68 Nassau Street, New York.



Deltah

PEARLS

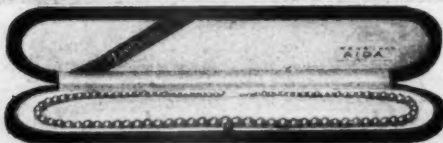
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and set forward with cries of alarm. They slipped, fell, scrambled up, fell again and made sorry progress.

One of the cluster of buildings was plainly on fire. The trees and the round hillocks concealed from them which one it was. As they ran stumbling, skating and sprawling, one headland and another disclosed this building and that building standing dark and unharmed.

They all guessed that it was Rander's cabin, and he was filled with dread of the suspicion that might attach to him. He thanked his stars that Nancy had compelled him to be with the Sheriff and Madsen.

They had not yet come in full view of his cabin, when Hingeley appeared shouting "Fire!" and floundering across the snow. He was so excited that before he realized it he had assumed the entire blame—talking pantingly as he turned back with the Sheriff.

"I was settin' there waitin' for you. I'd finished the papers and I was kind of dozin' off. Aint had much sleep recent, and we left the village so early and all. But I shook m'self awake like and lighted my cigar again. It had went out. I'd 'a' swore I blowed out the match, before I dropped it, but all of a sudden the noospapers blazed up and I like to get set on fire m'self. I jumped up and tried to tromple the fire out, but it kept ketchin' on the papers and things. I run out the door lookin' for a pail or somethin' but couldn't find one. I throwed armfuls of snow inside the door, but the blaze was somethin' turrible. That pine's chock full of rosin, you know. The smoke come rollin' out so's I like to smothered. I'm awful sorry, but—"

The Sheriff did not waste profanity on him. He lurched forward crackling through the snow, the others with him except Jeffers, who set off for the shed where he kept a reel of hose all ready against just such an emergency. As he ran, he called back to the chauffeur to fetch the fire-extinguishers out of the big house.

SUDDENLY, as the others ran, a screen of snow and pines seemed to withdraw and disclose the expected picture.

In the surrounding frame of black green pines the cabin was all one blaze like a huge fireplace. The flames were singing aloft with a symphonic harmony, an *allegro* of rejoicing, a festival of scarlets, crimsons, yellows and whites. Sparks went up in tinsel confetti, and the smoke was a vast black shawl flaunting among the pines. The trees about the cabin were catching, and long pennants of red flung up from the long pendants of green.

Larrick thought only of rescuing Clelia, and he drove forward, breaking through the ice as if wading through a greenhouse. He would have darted into the very core of the furnace; but Nancy, running lightly across the surface that yielded and checked him, overtook him and wrapped her arms about him, screaming to him above the surf-roar of the flames wild pleas against his madness.

He tore her hands free, but she gripped him again. She only halted him when she made him understand her desperate threat: "If you go in there to die, you've got to take me with you."



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This held him back. Indeed, the thought of her made him conscious of the blistering heat that was scorching his face and hands and hers. As he stood irresolute, a tree that had grown against the very wall of the cabin, and was now a tremendous plume of fire, came over crackling and crashed about them with a thud and a swish of flame.

He had enough to do to drag Nancy through the multitude of clutching hot fingers, and the blast of heated air almost suffocated him before he carried her out of danger and dropped to his knees on the snow, carrying her backward in a swoon.

The immediate need of the living drove from his mind for a moment the useless help he would have rendered to Clelia, and he dashed snow in Nancy's face and chafed her hands until he had her eyes open again.

But she fastened upon him and would not let him go. Not even when Jeffers and the other men came running up with

the line of hose, would she release him. He hardly forgave her even when Jeffers yelled that the water-pipes were frozen. The men ran back to the big house for fire-extinguishers, but by the time the chauffeur arrived with the first of the brass cylinders, the other trees about the cabin were afire and spread a red barrier against approach. The first extinguisher barely quenched the flames on the nearest tree before it was exhausted. And then the tree blazed up again.

Randel came limping up with a cylinder on his back and fell gasping at Nancy's side. It was useless to waste on the trees about the cabin the fire-quelling liquids that might be needed to save the rest of the buildings.

There was nothing to do but sit and watch. All the men lounged about in idleness before the frantic revelry of the fire. Mrs. Roantree and Berthe stood on the porch of the big house wringing their hands no more vainly.

Finally the roof collapsed, and a new fierceness possessed the heart of the over- Larrick's body shook as if the weight had fallen upon himself. Randel, however, found something to be glad of even in that horror.

"It's the best thing, old man," he mumbled. "Think what it will save that dainty body from enduring further. The logs she rested on will be like a funeral pyre. She is ashes, and there is nothing more for her to suffer. God love her bright soul!"

Larrick refused comfort at such a time. "But—the proof of the crime."

Randel almost laughed as he groaned: "We have all the proof there is in those plaster molds we took, thank God. And all her beauty is there too—all of it that could live."

The next installment of Mr. Hughes' remarkable novel will appear in the next, the May, issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE.

POOR DEAR PAPA

(Continued from page 66)

A few days later the discussion of Jimmy's availability was resumed in the presence of all the Busbys. Contrary to her usual custom, it was Olivia who took the initiative.

"About a card for Jimmy Raymond, Mamma. You're sending him one, I hope."

"I'm sorry, Olivia, that you've referred to that again. I had assumed that you would defer to my wishes about that young man. We are asking all the other people you suggested."

"I appreciate that, but either Jimmy gets a card or you may count me out. I'm not going to treat a nice fellow like Jimmy as though he were an outlaw when I'm meeting him every few days and he looks on me as a friend."

"You see him every few days? How and where do you see him?"

"I see him at the office about a business matter he has on hand and is good enough to ask my advice about."

"Loan, I suppose," suggested Wendell ironically.

"If he wants to borrow, his credit is good. Any time you want to hand me the hundred I lent you last Christmas, I'll be glad to have it."

"Fore!" piped Busby.

Mr. James Raymond not only received a card, but he attended the party. In white trousers and a blue-serge coat he was not distinguishable from the other young gentlemen who favored Mr. and Mrs. Mark Busby with their presence. He was a big blond whose erect carriage bore testimony to his participation with the A. E. F. in the little affair overseas.

Jimmy's very diffidence was attractive. Several times Olivia caught him in the act of escaping to the veranda, and she chose for him dancing partners that she knew would make a point of being nice to him. When the Governor arrived—Mrs. Busby had asked the Governor, to give an official stamp to the party—and Olivia had presented Jimmy, the young man's stock rose immediately.

"You're the Jimmy Raymond my boy Tom talks about? You were mighty fine to him when he was sick over there. I'm glad to have this chance to thank you. You must meet Mrs. Ranger as soon as I can find her. We want to see you in our own house."

The special attention bestowed upon Jimmy by the Rangers was a great relief to Mrs. Busby, but she was thoroughly mystified when Burgess, the president of the White River National, greeted Jimmy as though he were an old and intimate friend. He not only seemed enormously pleased to see the young man, but later, after refreshments had been served, Jimmy and Burgess were to be observed in earnest conversation in the quietest corner of the club veranda. They were joined by Thornton, the president of Sedgwick Motors, and two other citizens of highest financial rating; and Mrs. Busby, her curiosity aroused, noted that these influential citizens appeared to be showing Jimmy the greatest deference.

"Young Raymond shouldn't be monopolizing Mr. Burgess and those other gentlemen," she remarked to Olivia. "I suppose he's telling them war stories."

"You don't know Jimmy," laughed Olivia.

IT was on a sultry August morning that Busby, placidly taking his way over the links alone, found himself suddenly confronted by Erskine, carrying in his hand the morning paper so folded and gripped as to suggest that he meant to use it as a weapon.

"Why didn't you tell me what was coming in Sedgwick Motors?" he demanded furiously. "When I asked your opinion of the preferred stock, you pretended not to know anything about it."

"I didn't. Never had a cent in it. Hope you held on to your stock. Looks like it would go big."

"Do you mean to tell me you didn't know I sold my stock to your daughter two weeks ago?"

"Yep. Suppose she paid you the regular market price. You couldn't have done better anywhere else two weeks ago; legitimate transaction—no ground for kick."

"I can't believe you're telling me the truth!" stormed Erskine. "That girl knew all about young Raymond's improvement that makes the Sedgwick engine the best on the market. Raymond made a deal with Burgess and the rest of the crowd that reorganized the company right here at the clubhouse the night of your party!"

"Maybe they did. Didn't let me in on it. Never talk business with Olivia. Smart girl, Olivia. Better get your clubs and walk around with me—good for nerves."

AT Christmas the engagements of Co- stance Busby and Tom Gaylord, and of Dorothy Erskine and Wendell Busby were announced.

"I hope you're satisfied, Mark, with both these arrangements," Mrs. Busby said. "The trouble you had with Mr. Erskine was most unfortunate, but he seems willing to overlook it, and Dorothy is a lovely girl—just the steady character Wendell needs. Of course, you wouldn't want to broach the matter just yet, but no doubt Mr. Erskine, with his large interests, can find a place for Wendell somewhere. You and Wendell have never understood each other."

"Place for Wendell! Erskine hasn't any business that I know of—sold out the canning business when he moved to town."

"Don't be absurd, Mark. They couldn't live in the way they do unless they had a large income."

"Might be doing what we're doing—blowing everything in on a good time."

This remark had been dulled by constant reiteration; it was only a whimsicality, pardonable in a man who gave his wife a monthly check for four thousand one hundred and sixty-six dollars and sixty-six cents for the family expenses.



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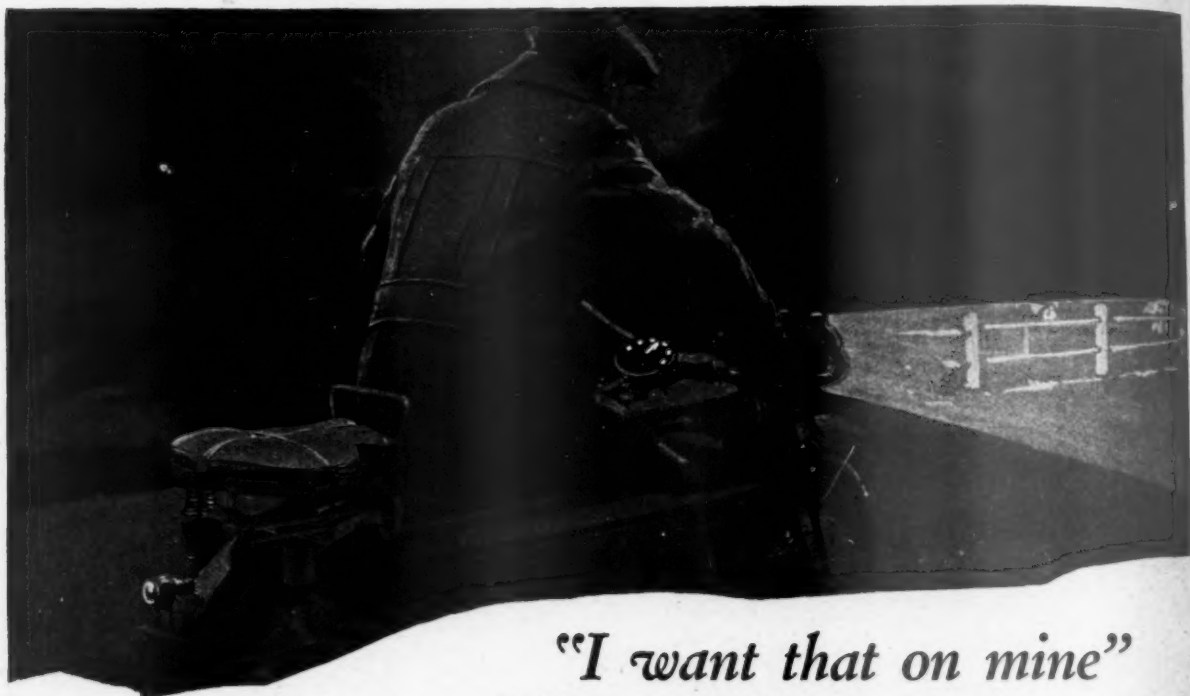
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Busby continued to bear himself tranquilly as one immune from all perplexities that trouble human kind. He went to the State agricultural school for the short midwinter course, that he might equip himself the better to manage his farm. Mrs. Busby watched for any sign that he was counseling Olivia as to the conduct of his old office, but he rarely went downtown, and she was unable to find that they conspired at home. Gossip had it in the business world, Wendell confided to his mother, that Olivia had rejuvenated the old agency and was making money. She had bought a lot of Sedgwick Motor bonds at their lowest price just before the reorganization, and was believed to have assisted Burgess, the banker, in picking up odd lots.

Portia and Billy Erskine had been slow to reach the conclusion that they were predestined to spend their lives together, due largely to Portia's disposition to carry on a great number of love-affairs at once. However, the discreet engineering of Mrs. Busby, assisted by Mrs. Erskine, brought about the announcement of the third engagement in March.

An exchange of courtesies between the Gaylords and the Busbys had followed the announcement that the two houses were to be united. Mrs. Busby gave a dinner as a means of bringing the matter to public attention. To this function Mark Busby assented with the amiability that characterized his ready acceptance of all the social duties his forth-stepping family urged upon him. As he watched the senior Gaylord smoke one of the excellent cigars with which Wendell kept the humidor supplied, Gaylord in due course touched upon his son's engagement.

"You understand, Busby, that the old family name is about all I have to give my boy. I wish I could establish him in business, but I'm sorry to say that is out of the question."

"No feeling; suppose the young people love each other; love's supposed to carry 'em through all their troubles."

"I want Tom to settle down," continued Gaylord. "I suppose the fact that he plays tennis better than anybody else around here is against him when it comes to finding a job. Some of my best friends have been a little prejudiced against him on that account when I've tried to get them to try him out. I hope, Busby, you won't feel that I'm trying to dump the job on you, but if you can make a suggestion, I'll appreciate it."

"Yep—been thinkin' about it. See what the boy has to say for himself first; always give 'em a chance."

CONSTANCE and Tom Gaylord were the high contracting parties in the first of the series of weddings. The ceremony was pronounced at St. Paul's church, of which Tom's grandfather had been a warden, a fact celebrated by a brass tablet on the wall, close to the Gaylord pew. The society reporters chronicled the event as a brilliant affair and laid due stress upon the union of two families of highest social importance.

It may have been that Wendell and Dorothy Erskine were discouraged by the splendor of the affair, for a few days later they eloped and were married by a justice of the peace in an adjacent county. They

set forth on a honeymoon in one of the Corning machines, which Busby had rented with the house. Mrs. Busby was greatly grieved by the frustration of her plans, seeing in the elopement nothing but a vulgar escapade unworthy of the family dignity. Busby, however, accepted the matter with his usual taciturnity and turned over to Mrs. Busby without comment Wendell's wire from Chicago asking for money.

The home wedding of Portia and Billy Erskine, celebrated in the middle of May, left Mrs. Busby weary but triumphant.

"I'm sure you feel as I do, Mark, a deep satisfaction in seeing the two girls and Wendell settled. There are so many chances of unhappy marriages these days, and we can only hope that we've done the best we can for our children. They will all be home next Sunday. We'll have just a quiet family dinner to talk over the future."

"Bad idea—future always disagreeable to discuss."

"You haven't confided to me your plans for Wendell and Tom, and I assume that you will have something to propose for Billy too."

His silence, his meek acceptance and acquiescence in everything she did in the year now drawing to a close, had encouraged in her the expectation that he had a happy surprise in store for his son and the two sons-in-law. Mrs. Busby's hints had hitherto failed to elicit the slightest intimation of what he meant to do for the three young men for whom, as Mrs. Busby viewed the matter, he was under mortal obligations to find employment.

"How long will it take you to pack up?" he asked with a discouraging change of the subject. "Turn over house promptly on thirty-first."

"Mark Busby, would you mind telling me what you propose doing?" she exclaimed with an asperity she had rarely employed since they left Rivington.

"Won't have long to wait; tell you all Sunday."

THE Sunday midday feast opened gayly. The three newly married couples were in high spirits, and with much merriment compared notes as to their honeymooning adventures. Busby, from the head of the table, exerted himself to make the first family reunion in all ways a happy occasion. Olivia alone seemed preoccupied, but when accused of envy by Constance, she entered spiritedly into the table talk.

"Let's move into the living-room—want a little conference before callers come," said Busby as he rose from the table.

The air at once became tense with expectancy. Busby planted himself before the mantel and looked about him with a patriarchal air. Mrs. Busby plied a fan somewhat nervously.

"Got to be serious sometimes in this world—not all play. For twenty years I kept running with my tongue out, trying to give you all you wanted. Got tired of it, cashed in everything I had, told you it was all I had, and to go ahead and kick as high as you pleased."

Constance tittered. Her father's joke was a year old, but it seemed best to continue the pretension that it was funny.

"You young men, as near as I can make it out," Busby continued, "haven't got a ghost of a chance of supporting your wives unless you go to work."

A gloomy silence, a numbing, oppressive silence, held them.

"Not surprised. Guessed all along you were leaving all that to me."

"I want you to know, Mr. Busby, that I'm not a loafer," protested Gaylord with dignity. "I'm going to start in right away to find some employment where I can work my way up."

"Good!" exclaimed Busby cheerfully. "But while you're waiting for the kind of a chance you want, you don't need to be idle. Idleness is bad for young men. Now, Erskine and Gaylord, don't think I'm harder on you than I am on Wendell; all in the same boat; got to bend your backs to the oars to keep from going over dam."

"I know anything you want me to do will be all right, Father," said Wendell with a confidence he did not feel.

JUST finished three bungalows out on my farm," Busby resumed, "—one for each of you; pick 'em out to suit yourselves. Farm labor hard to get; you three boys young and strong enough to make things hum; two hundred acres; best land in State; got a man out there to show you the ropes; bungalows fixed up for housekeeping; give you girls a chance to show your mettle."

"But Mark," cried Mrs. Busby tremulously, "have you considered what people will say?"

"Yep; don't care; I've let you spend everything I had except the farm, to buy your way in the city. Boys don't have to stay on farm if they can find a better job."

"And may I ask, Mark, what you and I are going to do? Here we are close to old age, and you suddenly tell me we're paupers."

"No more paupers than we've been for twenty years. I've rested up during my year off, and now I'm going to work again."

"At your time of life, Mark, what can you do?" moaned Mrs. Busby. "You let Olivia wheedle you out of the old business. That was a serious mistake."

"No kick on Olivia; she's tripled the business, put on some fancy touches I never had the nerve to tackle, and makin' 'em go. Olivia, you got something on your mind?"

"Just that I'm engaged: Jimmy and I are going to be married next month," Olivia announced quietly.

"I suppose that was inevitable," sighed Mrs. Busby. "Fine boy, Jimmy!" Busby ejaculated. "Guess you all know they've made him vice-president of Sedgwick Motors."

"And I suppose Olivia will turn over the business to him," said Mrs. Busby spitefully. "This is almost too much, Mark!"

"Wrong again; Olivia's going to incorporate the business and put me in to manage it. Jimmy's got enough to take care of Olivia; with the start he's got, ought to be a rich man in ten years."

"It's wonderful!" cried Constance. "I've always liked Jimmy."

Whereupon they all praised Jimmy.



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Even Mrs. Busby praised him, linking him with Bell, Edison and other great benefactors of mankind.

"I suppose you've got a bungalow somewhere for you and me to hide in?" Mrs. Busby inquired dolefully when they were through congratulating Olivia. "Or do you propose taking me back to Rivington?"

"No more Rivington, burned all bridges," Busby replied crisply. "Olivia's giving us a house, putting it in your name—new Burgess addition farther out on the boulevard. She's selling lots out there for Burgess, and needs some fashionable folks like us to give tone to the place."

"Some very nice people are going out there," Mrs. Busby murmured.

"This is a big jar, all right," said Constance, rising and walking to the middle of the room. "But we've all had a bully time, and I for one wouldn't change anything. I want Papa to know that I can see his side of it. We nagged him for money until he was nearly crazy, and I don't blame him for playing this trick on us."

"Your poor dear Papa—" began Mrs. Busby; but Wendell stopped her.

"Let's cut out the poor dear Papa stuff," he exclaimed impatiently. "Dorothy and I are not going to show the white feather; and you, Tom, and Billy, are good sports. We'll buckle down to the farm. Am I right?"

Tom and Billy assented with something bordering upon enthusiasm that Wendell was right; and their wives, bravely, though not without tears, announced that they would stand by their husbands through all the rigors and perils of farm life.

"You're all talking sensibly," said Busby, smiling upon them benignly. "One of these days you'll stop thinking of me as a stingy old curmudgeon and decide I wasn't so big a fool after all. Got to remember we can't eat our cake and have it. Best for everybody to work. Practice what I preach; I'll be at the office early in the morning, Olivia."

MESSRS. WENDELL BUSBY, William Erskine and Thomas Gaylord sat on a fence and watched the summer twilight deepen over a broad stretch of corn. Bronzed, hardened by a long summer of toil, freshened by a dip in the river, they listened to the whispering among the serried battalions with the tranquil satisfaction of men who have contributed their honest part in adding to the wealth of the world. On the veranda of the nearest bungalow, which happened to be Wendell's, their wives were chatting over their sewing.

"Queerest thing about the whole business," chuckled Gaylord, "is that nobody—the people in town, I mean—know that we fellows didn't just exactly choose hopping the clods for our portion. Your pop's a mighty good scout, Wendell; he never bragged about what he handed us, and nobody knows outside the family that we were shanghaied into becoming honest husbandmen. Everybody thinks we're all as rich as fat cream, and that we fellows are doing this just to set a good example to the scions of other families of wealth and lofty position. I'd like to get out in the middle of that corn



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and laugh real loud whenever I think of it."

"The girls have been perfectly bully," said Erskine. "They're buzzing up there on the porch right now about the poultry outlook and how they can boost the price of eggs."

A car whizzed in from the highway, and they identified it as Jimmy's before they heard their wives cheerily greeting Olivia. Raymond came stalking toward them, and they shook hands all round.

"The frost is almost ready for the punk," remarked the big fellow, "and experts are bragging about your crops. Incidentally, Mr. Busby is tickled to death with you; had lunch with him today and he wouldn't talk about anything but your success out here. He's on the way, but I wanted to give you a tip as to what's coming."

"Going to fire us?" suggested Erskine, knocking the ashes from his pipe.

"Not exactly. He's going to cut up the farm next spring and make something new and exclusive in the way of an addition. The papers are all ready for incorporating the White River Land Company, and the stocks to be divided among his children, all except Olivia; she's out of it. It's been his idea to have you plan the whole thing, thin out the timber and get the road making started and you'll have enough to do to keep you busy for a year before the lots are put on the market."

"Pretty fine," said Gaylord; "but I hate to see the farm go."

"You don't have to do it if you don't want to," Raymond continued. "He'd be glad to have you, Wendell, go into his office right now; that's coming sooner or later anyhow. And don't think me cheeky, but Sedgwick Motors would be tickled to have one or all of you in jobs you can make as big as you like—"

BUSBY'S arrival terminated the discussion. Mrs. Busby joined the group on the veranda, and the little man intercepted his son and sons-in-law as they went to meet him.

"What are you doing here, Jimmy? Bet you're trying to get my hands away from me. No sooner get a good man than somebody sneaks in and offers more wages. No loyalty—restless age."

"I'll tell you this, Mr. Busby," Erskine replied slowly, "that speaking for all of us, you're the best friend any young man ever had. We're all strong for you, and I'd like to see Jimmy or anybody else persuade us to leave you. That's the way we feel about it."

"You've said it," Gaylord affirmed. "We've had a grand good time out here, and we'll stick it out for the rest of our lives if you say the word."

"Nope; world needs young fellows like you boys; can't hide you on farm. Learned to carry your own weight—big things—appreciate it—proud of you. Come up on the porch and we'll talk things over with the girls."

And as they walked toward the house, his arm rested with unmistakable pride and affection on Wendell's shoulder.

THE CLAWS OF THE TONG

(Continued from page 51)

this morning a rough box was found outside the gates of the sailors' burying-ground on Richmond Hill. In it was a giant of a man, hopelessly insane—evidently, I judge, from some terrific mental shock wantonly inflicted.

"But hear the phase of this strange case which so interests me: Except for inconsequential rope-wounds on his wrists and ankles, the sailor was entirely unharmed physically—and his body is one of the most perfect specimens of a human physique I ever hope to see. But from neck to feet he is absolutely incapable of the slightest movement."

"Motor paralysis, eh?" queried Lee.

"Yes, absolutely complete; and so far as I have been able to determine, entirely without cause. I'd give a year's income to solve the secret that lies hidden in that man's body."

Lee Sat Kan flicked the ash from his cigar and mused thoughtfully.

"A strangely interesting case, doctor," he said at last. "It recalls to my mind an ancient Chinese manuscript I ran across some weeks ago during my research work in Oriental literature. This manuscript purported to be a bit of history of the reign of the fourth Manchu emperor in the seventeenth century. The old boy must have been a wary potentate with a special predilection for suspecting everybody about his palace of plotting against his peace and security. One fine evening this most temperamen-

tal sovereign waked from his sleep and straightway ordered a warrant of decapitation issued against the general-in-chief of all his armies—a mandarin with whom he had dined on the friendliest terms earlier in the evening. The warrant was to be made ready for his signature when he again awoke.

"The emperor's private physician—magicians they were called in that day—was a Four Brother tong-man, and the condemned mandarin happened to be the supreme chief of that society. So this most loyal physician drugged his royal master as he slept and operated upon him by injecting a certain double drug into the ganglia which control the motor nerve system of the body. According to my old parchment, these two drugs in uniting create a knot in the tissue surrounding the nerve-cells. The pressure of such a knot destroyed the old Manchu's power of locomotion. In consequence he was unable to sign the death-warrant, and the life of the Four Brother chieftain was preserved. Odd tale, isn't it?"

"Very," agreed the doctor. "Did your manuscript indicate the nature of the two drugs used?"

"No. It merely stated that the prescription is preserved in the secret archives of the Four Brothers tong," Lee Sat Kan answered. "Oh, yes, of course, the whole story is purely legendary. Well, I must say good night. You've interested me mightily with your sailor's case. Don't



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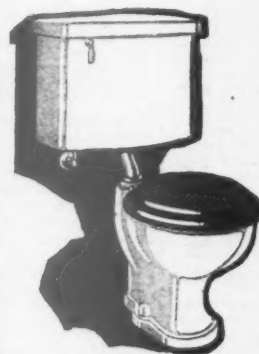
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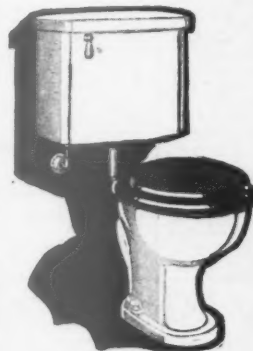
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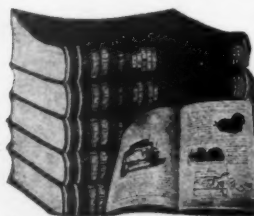
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fail, please, to let me know if there are developments of further interest. You'll dine with me Thursday? Good, I shall expect you."

In the seclusion of the *tong* room a half-hour later Lee Sat Kan drew out the Four Brothers' "Book of Justice" and turned its pages to one that was topped with eight crimson dragon's claws. Slowly and with meticulous care he drew a

hooked curve across each of those symbols of unredressed murder.

"So is Uleaborg the Finn's debt of blood fully paid without the spilling of blood. Thus is the Four Brothers' might proved this day—even as in the reign of the Fourth Manchu," he murmured as he closed and laid away the book.

Ten minutes later he was smoking and lounging comfortably in his library.

CONFLICT

(Continued from page 61)

was forever pushing and jostling stones which obstructed it in narrow places, and splashing them with cool spray, and then scudding on with a good-natured, throaty jeer.

Dorcas sat down beside a miniature waterfall and made pretense of preparing her rod and flies. As a matter of fact, she cared little for the fishing. It was a pretext; it gave her an excuse for taking to the woods that would be comprehensible to the inquisitive.

Dorcas remained in that shady spot for an hour; was about the difficult business of urging herself to move on, when across the brook she heard some heavy creature moving through the undergrowth. She was startled, but not frightened.

THERE reached her ear the protesting squeal of some creature, then the voice of a man as if in reply and explanation. Then the bushes were thrust aside, and Jevons was revealed, bare of head, his red shirt open at the throat, an expression of boyish delight and amusement upon his face. He did not see Dorcas, for he was looking down at a dark, writhing armful which he clutched to his breast.

Dorcas stared, fascinated. The man was a modernized god of the forest, handsome, gay, as much a part of the landscape as the trees themselves, and seeming not more natural nor less because of the bear-cub whose protests he soothed with an air of humorous gentleness.

Jevons looked across the brook, perceived Dorcas and nodded gayly, making a gesture with his prisoner. He picked his way across upon the stones and stood before her, looking very boyish and pleased with the world and himself and his pet.

"William," he said to the cub, "this is Miss Remalie." The cub cocked his head and stared at Dorcas, then uttered a squall, very much as if he saw in her a possible rescuer and were bespeaking her aid.

"He never saw a young lady before," explained Jevons.

"It's—a young bear, isn't it?" asked Dorcas, at a loss and correspondingly angry with herself for her lack of poise.

"Well," said Jevons with an air of one cautiously making a statement upon some dubious point, "I should say it was a bear. At first glance he appears to be a bear. Of course, he might develop into something else, but at this moment I think I am safe in asserting positively that he is a bear."

"How did you come here?" Dorcas asked, attempting an air of cool detachment, if not of resentment. However, she

was too much interested in the spectacle to make an unqualified success of it.

Jevons face altered, became grave. "If I had seen you," he said, "I should have crossed the brook farther down."

Dorcas felt shame.

"I should not have said that," she told him.

He smiled again. "William and I will be moving along. We won't disturb you. Come along, William. Save up your voice. She won't come. Poor little feller,"—this to Dorcas,—"he's an orphan."

"You didn't kill his mother!"

Jevons shook his head. "One of my men—last night. So I had to keep an appointment with William. Knew he'd be out of luck without a parent. Knocked off work today to find him."

"You gave up a day just to find a bear-cub?" Dorcas said curiously.

"He worried me. It's no fun being a little shaver alone in the woods. Some idiot might have shot him."

The cub lay quiet in Jevons' arms, watching with interest as Dorcas opened her basket and explored it for sweets. He sniffed the icing of her cake suspiciously, then with interest which developed into enthusiasm.

"You see," said Jevons, "how the luxuries of an effete civilization undermine the sturdiest backwoods character."

"He's cunning. Can you—tame him?"

"Cubs take to the gregarious life. They thrive on sugar and affection. In a week he'll be inventing tricks to win confectionery." He paused uncertainly. "I—Would you like to have him for a pet?"

Accept a gift from this man! The snobbishness that still resided in her asserted itself, and she prepared to stare at Jevons with her most finished Lenox stare; but somehow she could not manage it. William interfered. He was altogether too cunning to be stared about, and besides, she *did* want him.

"I'd love to have him," she said girlishly.

"William, you may now regard Miss Remalie as your mistress. If you accept the situation calmly, she will doubtless scratch your ear. I'll have a collar and chain fixed for him, and leave him at the hotel for you. It's a great relief to find a home for him. Thank you."

He was a dozen feet away before she spoke. "Mr. Jevons!"

He paused and half turned toward her. "Mr. Jevons—you know what I know."

She hesitated. Dared she tell him her uncle had been informed of Jevons' identity? She had been about to tell him, to warn him. Something had demanded it of her, but now she found herself unable

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to approach the subject, there in the clean woods. He waited for her to go on, and the pause became embarrassing. "Mr. Jevons," she repeated, "my uncle—be careful."

Jevons laughed. "Your uncle and I," said he, "are keeping pretty close tabs on each other these days. However, I don't mind telling you, the wise men of the locality are betting on John Remalie. I'm backing myself. Good-by."

CHAPTER XII

DURING her ride home, Dorcas debated with herself as to the future of William the cub. Knowing her uncle as she did, she felt certain he would give the creature a cold welcome. She was determined, however, to have the little fellow by hook or by crook. It was more than the mere desire to possess an unusual pet. She could not have explained to herself just why it was that William was so important to her, but the fact remained. She considered if it would be the best course to ask her uncle's permission to harbor William, or if it would be wiser to take matters for granted and to introduce the bear into the family circle unheralded. She decided upon the latter course, both because it was bolder, and because she detested the thought of asking anything from John Remalie.

Therefore, when the wagon stopped at the hotel, William, arrayed in new collar and chain, was lifted squirming into the back and driven with his new mistress

to the Remalie house. Orrin offered to lead him into the yard, but Dorcas asserted her independence.

"If I can't manage him *now*, I might as well give up," she said. "Just lift him down, please."

Clearly William objected to collars and coercion. He lay on the ground and rolled over, clawing at the disquieting band about his neck.

"Kind of ornery, haint he?" chuckled Orrin.

"I'm not used to bears," said Dorcas breathlessly.

"Jest like folks," said Orrin. "Treat him like you'd treat folks under like circumstances. Sot in his mind, fer sich a youngster. Try some of this here tact I heard a travelin' man braggin' about 'tother night."

"There're times," panted Dorcas, "when tact isn't—worth—a—darn!"

With that she snatched young William from his braced haunches and gripped him in her arms.

Dorcas tied William to a tree, and then, with a temerity she had never before exhibited, invaded Miss Labo's pantry and foraged a pan of bread and milk. Miss Labo stared unbelieving, her small eyes glinting with something more than mere resentment. She eyed Dorcas out of the door and down the steps, her lips a grim, straight line. There was something intent, maliciously purposeful in her expression—something threatening, unnatural, almost inhuman. She walked to the window and stood there looking out at Dorcas and William, and the very

stillness of her posture was ominous. She watched as a she-wolf might watch some hated creature devouring her kill, unable to seek vengeance at the moment, but patient to wait until her opportunity came.

WHEN Dorcas reentered the house, Miss Labo confronted her. "What critter's that?" the woman demanded.

"A cub," said Dorcas shortly.

"What's it doin' here?"

"It's mine."

Miss Labo paused, staring into Dorcas' face. "I haint goin' to have it around."

Dorcas found the hardihood to stare back. It was an arrogant stare, the stare of a mistress directed upon an impertinent menial. Miss Labo comprehended it, and it ate into her brain like some corroding acid.

She completed her arrogant stare and stepped past Miss Labo contemptuously. Miss Labo did not turn to watch her departure, but stood very still, her eyes fixed and vacant and glowing with somber fire.

At supper that night the three ill-assorted companions seated themselves in silence. John Remalie was unusually long in his blessing of the food. When it was completed and the amen whispered, Miss Labo cleared her throat and spoke to the host before John Remalie.

"She's fetched a bear-cub here. I want have it."

Remalie glanced at Dorcas, who took up the challenge.

"I have a little cub. He's in the yard chained to a tree. I want him for a pet, and I intend to keep him."

"That critter must be got rid of," said Miss Labo.

Remalie cleared his throat. He smiled the merest trifle, but it was not a genial smile, as he turned to Dorcas. In the incident he saw a way to humiliate Miss Labo, to extract another drop of the revenge he craved.

"A cub?" he asked with spurious geniality.

"Yes."

"Keep him, by all means, my dear. I'll have a cage made for him in the morning. Of course, you may keep him."

Dorcas perceived her uncle's motive, and offered him no word of thanks. Miss Labo arose abruptly from the table, not to return. She took her grievance into the kitchen and toyed with it and rolled it under her tongue, cuddling it and rejoicing in it. She enlarged upon it, made excursions away from it to garner other grievances, and then joined all together with the major grievance of her life—the exclusion of her son from participation in the wealth of his father.

In that kitchen she reached a determination, final and irrevocable. Her son should enjoy the patrimony that the law of the land would deny to his illegitimacy. How he would come into the enjoyment finally she did not perceive, but that was distant and she was patient. She did perceive that Dorcas Remalie was the chief impediment in his way. The removal of that impediment would not put her son in possession of the wealth that was rightfully his, but it would place him immeasurably closer to it. Let the distant future care for itself. When the

moment arrived, the moment would be taken care of; it was the present that demanded attention.

Miss Labo's mind was not one that could plan or piece together cunningly an intricate and coherent strategical scheme. Her method was to seek the enemy and to fight him where found, then to seek him again and to fight again, as opportunity permitted, profiting as she could by each success.

She did not eat even after Dorcas and John Remalie left the dining-room, but she did the dishes methodically and bestowed them neatly in the cupboard according to her custom, each dish upon the exact spot it had occupied from its appearance in the house. The process was automatic, requiring no thought. She heard John Remalie leave the house, and presently Dorcas followed him, on her way to the library, which was open on that evening. There came a faint knock on the door.

"WHO'S there?" said Miss Labo. A man's voice replied indistinctly. "You can't come in," said Miss Labo shortly. "No tellin' when they'll be home. You shouldn't 'a' come a light night sich as this."

"Nobody can see me here." Miss Labo sniffed. "Things has come to a pass," she said. "What I'm afraid of is I'll get put out of this house. That girl's gittin' uppity."

The voice inquired how matters were coming along.

"You know as well as me. Haint no need to make up to that girl. Remalie's fixed that. Even if you got her, you wouldn't git the money with her. Don't see how he come to fix a will the way he done. The leetle snip! You leave her be. I haint goin' to have you marryin' her, d'ye hear that? 'Twont do no good."

But, the voice declared, it had looked upon Dorcas and found her pleasing in its sight. It went farther. It asserted it had reached a height of desire for her that had become unbearable.

"Ye know what she thinks of ye. She's showed ye plain enough, haint she? Git that notion out of your head. I got my plan, and I mean to stick by it. Don't you go meddlin' nor interferin'. Now you git out of here and don't be seen. I got things to do."

The voice retired; and Miss Labo, having completed her task, went to bed. The next afternoon she left the house, a thing so unusual for her as to be startling, and trudged back into the woods at the edge of town. There she occupied herself for hours, searching and culling and sorting.

Now, it is a fact to be considered, that whereas the State surrounds with inhibitions and restrictions the sale of poisonous drugs, Nature requires of those who demand them of her only a certain knowledge. Nature permits to grow, unlabeled and free from warning signs, berries and roots and fungi whose juice is death. If one desires a deadly substance, where would one find a more certain, more easier accessible one than the poisonous mushroom? And how trace the stealthy hand of the poisoner in its application? Borgia herself might have sought in vain for a method of causing the death of an enemy



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less open to the suspicion of authority than the mingling of fungi of the noxious variety with a dish of the harmless?

How would a fatality so caused be regarded save as a regrettable accident, a thing to be wept over, but never investigated or regarded with suspicion?

MISS LABO returned to the house with her findings and bestowed them carefully in her own room against the time of need. There was no need for haste. It would be wiser to bide her time. But one has natural curiosities. The boy with a new gun wishes to determine how well it will shoot. The individual into whose possession comes any object endowed with potentialities, is restless until he has observed the effect of those potentialities.

Miss Labo was restless for days, and the days stretched into weeks. Every day and every week urged her to experiment, to make certain, to be convinced by the evidence of her own senses. She exhibited no small self-restraint, but even the most stoical will reach a point beyond which resistance fails. It was late in October when the leaves, having blazoned the forests with glory, were falling, to lie and decay and to return to the earth as earth, that she prepared a dish with as much and great care as she would have

exercised had it been destined to be placed on the table of the dining-room which adjoined. When it was finished, she peered into it, and smelled of it, and was satisfied.

On the following morning Dorcas came down the stairs and, as her custom had become, issued forth into the yard to visit with William the cub. William had increased in wisdom and in stature, and a great friendship had sprung up between him and his mistress. He invented tricks to tease favors from her; he was more than intelligent—he was shrewd. His life was a joyous, mischievous, gracious life, and Dorcas discovered that it made her own more bearable, which is the way of gracious, joyous lives.

She walked to the shady spot where William's cage was placed, a lump of sugar in her fingers, and spoke.

"See what I've got for you, William!" she said.

William lay on his side, asleep. Her voice did not arouse him. Mischievously she stirred him with a twig, but he did not respond. William was dead!

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THE FAITH OF HOLY JOE

(Continued from page 36)

knew that the things he had written were set down with honesty and conviction. It ran, in part:

I have been sick, but am a little better. I was making eleven dollars a night, and the doctor says I did too much. I was in bed a month and am just able to work a little. . . . I have all this bad luck coming to me . . . been no account . . . neglected you when you needed me . . . things went wrong because I didn't do right, as you have always said. Doctor says I can't work hard—says to go home and get light work outdoors . . . unable to save a dime a week now . . . hospital I can go to free if I get worse, but don't like to do that. . . . He says I want need to if I can get fresh air and a easy job.

I hate to ask you for anything, because I have been such a skunk, but if I can get ten dollars, I can get up there and find work and take care of you. There is no one here who will lend me money, and I don't blame them, and the doctor says I must get out soon. All I want is a chance to show you I am not all bad.

Holy Joe read his boy's letter in the post office with his heart rapping his ribs; and then he limped swiftly along Bridge Street, lifted above the pain in his ankle and the feebleness of his muscles by the excitement of desperation.

His boy had called to him in distress, and he found no joy in the thought that Charley had come out all right, or that there would be comfort for his loneliness in the home-coming. He was conscious only of his helplessness. Ten dollars? It might as well have been a thousand!

NO one would loan him money without asking the reason for the necessity, and he knew what people in Charlevoix thought of his son. They would mistrust and think that Charley was only trying to extort money from his penniless wreck of a father. He knew the truth. Oh, he knew! But he could not convince others.

From force of inertia he turned into the grocery store where he had intended stopping, anyhow. He had nothing in his room but some cold fish and salt, and in his pocket were forty-two cents. He looked about, bewildered, trying to think what he had planned to buy, and he could not focus his thought. Things went round.

There were oranges, which Charley liked; and cheese, which Joe craved—other things, many other things. A woman was buying dill pickles, and his swirling mind recalled how Charley had loved them! For the life of him, he could think of nothing just then but Charley, still in dresses, snatching dill pickles and

scuttling away from his irate mother; and Joe's lips twisted in a smile, though his eyes were misty.

"My, they're high," the woman said. Yes, everything was high! and Joe, with forty-two cents, needed ten dollars now!

He heard the grocer say: "And scarce! I paid fifteen dollars for that barrel and can't get any more."

Fifteen dollars! Joe's picture of mischievous little Charley was wiped out by the clink of the words. Fifteen dollars for dill pickles, and his boy needed ten! Ten was as large. Anything over forty-two cents was as large!

He went away with a dime's worth of crackers and sat panting in his room trying to think what he could do to make all this come out right. No money, no credit. . . .

Through the window he saw Tommy Blue coming to anchor in the harbor; he started up, then sank back. No; that would not be right. Tommy would give him the money gladly, but his money was stolen, and it would not be right even to borrow it. Holy Joe clamped his trembling jaw. He would have to do the right thing to make this come out right!

Then the Tempter whispered: Five thousand dollars! Five thousand dollars! It is there—yours—take it!

Trembling, Joe Jessup paced the tiny room, but that Voice persisted:

Anyhow, your property is not stolen; you found it. Against the law? A misery maker? Pshaw! You are in trouble—use it. Use it!

"No, no!" mumbled the old man, sinking upon his bed and burying his face in his hands. "No, God, don't let him make me; don't let him make me do it! It wouldn't be right, and I've got to do right, God, if it's goin' to come out all right!"

All night he paced back and forth, heart and breath racing to no avail.

The Tempter was a sly devil. He gave up direct argument and crept in cunningly. He let Holy Joe imagine what might happen if it were right to break the law of the land and the moral law. Suppose, he reasoned, you were to put an ax and block-and-tackle into the catboat. Just suppose, now; don't plan to act on it. You could sail out tomorrow and take it aboard and bring it back in the evening. And Tommy Blue would hide it for you and sell it; and before noon the next day you would have enough to bring Charley home in style. Just suppose all this; don't do it, because it isn't right—but pretend it might be right!

On and on, endlessly—with the Tempter whispering his damnable hypotheses.

Dawn was coming up out of the east when Holy Joe went aboard the catboat. He carried an ax and block-and-tackle. He stowed them for'd and went back and sat on a square timber and tried to comfort himself by imagining just for the hour that such a way was all right. . . . And it worked! He was comforted wonderfully!

There another tentacle of temptation took hold, and by daylight others had found purchase; and when Dan Hogan came down to work, those leechy arms were strangling Holy Joe's conviction, his heart, the very breath, of his body.

All that forenoon he moved about numb and dumb.

He saw Tommy Blue doing some washing on the deck of his boat—good Tommy, who knew the way certain things were done and would help him.

"I guess I'll take a little sail, Dan," he said at last, his own voice strange in his ears.

"Sure, Joe. Do you good. You look a little wore out."

Do him good! Just to pretend that this thing was right? He should say it would do him good! He did not know that that warm feeling as of relief was only another slimy coil encircling him.

As Holy Joe went past, Tommy Blue looked up and waved and smiled. The old man seemed to be struggling, sort of clearing his throat, as if he found difficulty in making his voice function. Then he spoke:

"Be here tonight, Tommy?"

"Bet your life, Joe. Anything I can do for you?"

Joe shook his head. No, there would be nothing—

"If there is, just holler; any little thing—" came Tommy's voice.

INTO the lake, straight down upon the island, close-hauled in a spanking breeze, Holy Joe sailed his lumbering craft—pretending—pretending, with every concession to the Tempter, masquerading as pretense, only binding him the tighter!

He put the boat on the beach in a sheltered spot and sat there a long time meditating. If this *should* be the right thing, how would he manage? Of course, his game must stop now. But if he *were* going ahead with it, what would he do?

Automatically his mind began planning it all out, and before he knew it, Joe was at work. He drove two stakes on either side the bow and two at the stern, wedging the boat firmly against the beach. He ran two timbers from the sand to her gunwale, for skids, and looked around and sighed. If this only were right, how easy the rest would be! But it was wrong—and he took one of the skids down and left it down an hour—and put it back under the Tempter's urge to go ahead and see how easy the whole thing *would* be.

He worked the barrel out of its hiding-place, wheezing, flinching when his weight shifted on the injured ankle. His hands trembled, and his blows were uncertain as he drove a snubbing stake.

The barrel was close up to the boat before he stopped again. He contemplated it for a time. He could put it in, on its side, and no one would ever suspect him—

—Holy Joe Jessup—of rum-running. Tommy Blue would be there, waiting to help. . . . Another stake went in; the tackle was rigged anew. . . . The barrel moved with surprising ease up the skids. It poised at the rail—toppled, and settled with a thud in the boat, listing her over with its weight, and rocking a bit before it settled head up.

Five thousand dollars!

Holy Joe looked about, for he had heard a laugh, a mocking, menacing, ice-cold laugh of triumph! It did not come from outside; it came from in there, in his heart, he realized, where the whispering of the Voice had come from, and all

the sense of righteousness, all the sacred thing he had kept immaculate through years of misfortune rose up and sent the blood roaring through his ears to drown that laugh, sent a cleansing rage into his heart to wipe out Despair.

"It aint right," he shouted to the lake in his crackling old voice. "Charley—me an' you'll pull out somehow—clean! We wont be low-down! We'll git out all right—somehow."

Sweat, not from physical exertion, broke out upon his body. His hands trembled and clutched. He looked about a bit wildly, mouth open and breath fast and rasping. He saw his ax, the ax that had helped him on this path to sin, and grasped the handle resolutely.

"Mister Satan, stand by!" he shouted. "Stand by, 'cause I'm goin' to knock your damned head in!"

He swung the ax and brought it down on the top of the barrel with all his strength. It bounced back as if in mockery of his vigor, but he swung again and again, panting, sobbing, snarling at the feel of the invisible hands that gripped at his arms and at his body, invisible hands that were trying to drag him back, trying to stay his feeble old efforts.

"Leggo!" he shouted. "It aint right! It's all wrong—from the first it's been—"

He stopped short. A crack had opened, and under his last blow came a spurt of liquid. Another blow, and the wood broke; still another, and a section of the head went in with a crunch and a splash. Joe flung his ax away and advanced.

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"I'll dump you into the lake!" he rasped as he put his weight on the barrel. "You'll tempt nobody else—nobody—no—"

His words died in his throat. He swayed backward. The pressure of his arms released the barrel and it sloshed level again. A long, fibrous something floated up through its broken head. Holy Joe snatched it out and eyed it and dropped it to the sand. He peered closer—lifted a piece of the sundered oak.

He saw a greenish fluid with light scum on it—objects almost floating. He reached in and poked one with an uncertain finger. He picked it up.

"Dill pickles!" he mumbled hollowly. "Dill—pickles!"

Then, as he looked wildly about, a recollection, a hope came to him. The words of the grocer last night:

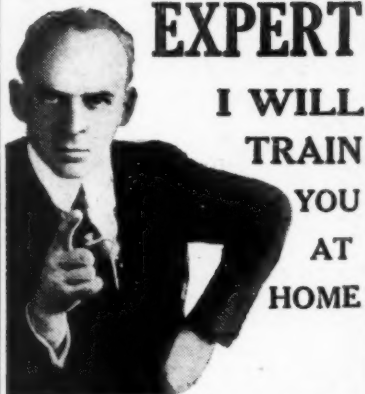
"Fifteen dollars for those, and I can't get any more."

Fifteen dollars! Fifteen—and ten was all he—

The knees of Holy Joe hinged beneath him. He sank slowly into the shallow water beside his boat, the shadow of the pickle-barrel over his bowed shoulders. Kneeling there, with the cool, clean touch of the breeze, and of the lake soothing his fevered old body—

"O God," he sobbed, "O God, I thank Thee for this. It was the right way, God An' I was bound to have it the right way Honest, I was. I meant that about dumpin' it in. . . . An' it's all comin' out right."

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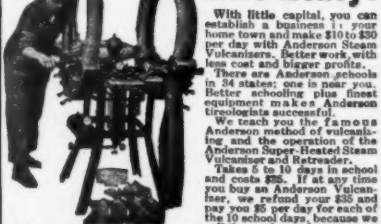
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CROSSING UP AUGUSTUS

(Continued from page 80)

from what you have told me I shall have that because the Desert Exploration Company will exploit the property and protect my interests quite as if I were a man and could protect them for myself." She uttered this as if it were the statement of a delicious foregone conclusion; but the whole soul of her had arisen into the eyes to transform it into an interrogation which Glen McWilliams must answer assuringly at the very moment when, in the hollow soul of him, he was muttering: "And Nelson has taken her mine away from her, and she does not know it!"

Yet to this question the eyes had put, Glen answered stoutly, unhesitatingly: "Yes, Mrs. Bennett; it will."

Thereupon he assisted her in climbing out of the prospect-hole. At its edge they parted, Glen plunging off down the mountain-side to where he had left his car.

"Well, I'll be damned!" he exploded, when he reached it. "I do be damned." His chin was thrust out, his lips clamped very firmly, as he turned the little car toward town. Nelson was in the office, waiting to hear from him before starting on the long night drive to Reno, there to catch the next day's train for New York.

"What will you take for your option on Dorothy number one and number two?" asked Glen, the minute he strode through the door.

"Ha-ha!" laughed Nelson cannily. "I'll not sell. What do you think of them?"

"Promising," declared Glen frankly, "just as promising as our own. Same general formation, same sort of out-crop—same sort of assays on surface explorations—better, if anything."

"Great stuff!" chuckled Nelson, slapping his lean leg. "Maybe I didn't drive a nice little bargain there."

"Too good, Mr. Nelson," urged Glen. "That's the thing I don't like about it. She's only a woman—frail little thing, fighting for her liberty against a rich old devil who is trying to hold her in a disgraceful bondage." That was the way Glen's imagination had figured it out. "It gets on my conscience."

"On your conscience? Say!" The features of Nelson became more fox-like than ever. He laughed.

"I've always kept the name of the D. E. C., pretty clean out here, or you might not have found her so complacent. I think, Mr. Nelson, you ought to let me re-draw that bond and make it read more like the others, with a block of stock for the little woman."

"The D. E. C.?" Nelson's cackinnations were more disagreeable still this time. "Haven't you noticed that those four options I turned in this afternoon were a private spec, of mine?"

"A private spec!" iterated Glen dumbfounded.

"Except," qualified Nelson, his voice becoming suddenly confidential and ingratiating, "except that when we get through with the other deal and I come to close up on these options, I'll let you in on them too, McWilliams. In four weeks

from today, young man, you're going to be richer at twenty-seven than you ever dreamed of being at fifty."

"And out of the opportunity of the D. E. C., while the D. E. C. is paying us salaries?" murmured an inner monitor. But so powerful was the Nelson magnetism, so great was Glen's deference to the other man's judgment, that for a time he was silent. But down at the car the voice within made itself heard again.

"What's the matter?" demanded the vice-president. "You're not as enthusiastic over this project as you ought to be."

"Mr. Nelson, I'm not happy about that woman's claims," confessed Glen with simple candor. "It isn't a great amount to you—just your love of a bargain. I want you to let me re-draw that bond."

Nelson frowned.

"No!" he declared sternly. "No! Don't be a soft-hearted fool, McWilliams. Business is business. That's one thing I'm stubborn about. You put that transaction through when the time comes, exactly as I've laid it out. Let her go, Collins. So long! Remember the details, young fellow, and don't fall down on a single one of them." A long, index finger was shaken warningly and the vice-president was whirled away.

"Well, what do you know about that?" inquired the young man breathlessly of nobody in particular, since the street was nearly empty. Then he too frowned grimly. "Just for that," he muttered, looking at the cloud of dust which had shut the speeding car from view, "just for that, I'll fight you, Nelson. I'll work with you, but I'll fight you. I'll cross you up. I'll cross you up till there'll never be a minute between now and the day when that Bennett option expires that you'll think of wanting to close on it."

BUT crossing up Augustus Parker Nelson proved something less than easy. In part this was because of the adroitness of Augustus, who could switch his tactics upon the split of a second. In part it was because of his secretiveness, for when Glen started out to do this crossing, he found that he did not know so much of Augustus Parker's plans after all—he only knew the part of them that he was to carry out. He could cross those up, of course, and he promptly began to do so. From that hour forth no more of the material of the ore-producing north shaft was assayed. The daily samples came into the office and stood in a row on Glen's desk, but none of them went down the street to the office of the metallurgist; yet the samples from the south shaft just beginning to show values, although as yet small, irregular and uncertain, and the samples from the east shaft, showing no values at all, went regularly to the assayer, and it was the reports of these that, after the agreed interval of one week, began to go daily to Nelson in New York in cipher.

Yet Glen had no intention of breaking with Nelson—of killing his own

golden goose; in consequence he was now dancing momentarily on the edge of a yawning precipice that gave him chills every time he dared look down. He expected Cuttybone Select to soar—knew that it must soar, ultimately, but he proposed deliberately and artfully to delay that soaring till the singing sands of thirty days ran out—proposed morning by morning to extract a modicum of the confidence of Nelson in his own enterprise until concern for his own immediate financial life should push the closing of the Bennett option from his thoughts or kill the idea dead as conscience in the unscrupulous operator's breast.

But when a young man with enthusiasm and ideals ventures to cross swords with an older man, astute, resourceful and relentless, it often comes to pass that the young man is but blithely sawing the limb off between himself and the tree.

When those low-value telegrams began to arrive, Glen expected them to give Nelson pause. Instead it appeared that they gave the market pause. The Cuttybone stock had been distributed at twenty cents per share; it had opened on the San Francisco Stock Exchange and the New York Curb at that figure, and stuck there, waiting for news of development that should send it kiting upward. But while Glen watched the daily market reports, Cuttybone began mysteriously to sink. It sagged to fourteen. And then came the seventeenth of June, the day when the pool on seventy-five thousand shares of the promotion stock expired. Nelson's plain duty to all immediately concerned was to see that the pool was renewed for another thirty days; but obviously he did not do his plain duty, for a flood of shares appeared upon the market, and the price broke quickly to twelve, to ten, to six, and on the third day was kicking round on curb and floor at three cents. Such a break in any D. E. Co. stock was unprecedented.

"The black devil!" exclaimed Glen, a great light dawning. "The unscrupulous black devil! He has used my daily reports to break the market to nothing and induce our own stockholders to let their shares go. Then he'll buy 'em in. At three cents it wouldn't take much capital to absorb the whole million and a half of them. Money? A fortune? Why, of course he'll make a fortune—that way. But I don't want any of it myself, and I'll block him yet. Those low assay reports will begin getting that old fox's own goat, when he sees how they keep up; and I'll see that they do keep up."

GLEN MCWILLIAMS was not the only one who noticed what was happening to Cuttybone Select. In a cozy vale some thousands of feet below that snowline at which Glen had gazed a couple of weeks before, was a nest among giant redwood trees. A wide, level floor had been laid upon a terraced hillside between the trunks of ancient sequoias, and over this an oblong canopy of gayly striped tenting was raised, forming a pavilion in the open air, from the furnishing of which no detail that wealth could supply or ingenious mind devise had been omitted that might minister to the comfort of the gentleman who dwelt in the lodge.

It was an hour of noonday silence.

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In a hammock beneath a smaller tent on one side the main pavilion a young physician lolled. The French chef moved about noiselessly in his out-of-doors kitchen; a Jap boy rearranged a rustic and simply equipped sideboard, one eye upon his task, the other upon his master.

At the farther end of the pavilion the master dozed in a grass-woven chair, his mouth open, his purplish but no less patrician features marked by lines of suffering, pride and force.

At length the sleeper sighed and awoke. "Hashi! Hashi!" a complaining voice broke out. "Where the devil is my tonic?"

"Him come quick!" answered the boy with alacrity. The rattle of the ice in the shaker was agreeable music to the ears of the old man, and from where he reclined he watched the boy's movements thirstily.

"François!" he called, in the same quivering tone. "François! Why the devil do I have to call you twice?"

"Oui, m'sieur, oui!" squeaked the chef, flying on noiseless toes toward his master.

"Some of the New Zealand clam broth, François. Nothing else, damn you! Nothing else. Don't you go trying me with any of those dashed French delicacies of yours. If you ever feed me another snail, I'll—I'll— Yes. Ah! Um!"

The boy had arrived with the "tonic." François shrugged his shoulders with an expression of wronged innocence, salaamed low and sped away.

The young physician swung his feet down and peering calculatingly over the back of the hammock, considered whether it were wiser to go out and risk abuse by proffering ministrations, or to let well enough alone and wait a call that was sure to come.

ALL this while, the hectic old man had been cannily and shamelessly deceiving his physician by concealing a newspaper behind his back in the chair. Newspapers were taboo. Magazines and books the patient might have, but not the daily journals, lest a glimpse at the market reports might set his too active mind to work in channels from which perform it must now be withheld. Yet the doctor allowed himself the newspaper, reading it furtively, and concealing the issues between the mattresses of his bed; and the sick man, being a sly, observant person, knew this. This morning, while the man of medicine was indulging in a stroll, the patient had given his gouty legs a little try-out round the place, with the result that when he returned to his accustomed lounging-chair, he bore as a triumphant prize some printed pages of the daily news; but just as he would have fed his soul upon them, the doctor had reappeared; whereupon the old man had concealed the paper and assumed to doze.

Now, having consumed his tonic, smacking his lips over it grimly, and having consumed also that delicious bowl of soup made from a rare fresh-water clam, the sick man felt his nerves soothed, and leaning back, issued gurgling sounds of contentment. Noting these, the doctor sank back to his pillow, the chef lighted a cigar and the Jap polished again the glasses that had been supremely polished before.

Shrewdly observing all this, the astute old gentleman, furtively folding his paper lest its crackling betray him, got his eye to the financial page and began a gloating study of every market in which he was interested. Perceiving that cotton was stationary, that hogs were up, always up, and that steel was behaving unaccountably, he took a turn at the mining stocks and suddenly exploded with geyserlike sounds that brought the whole camp into alertness, with the Jap, the doctor and the chef running a footrace to see who should proffer first-aid first.

"Look at that, now!" the old man barked, shaking the paper accusingly in the doctor's face, as if he were to blame for bringing the sheet to the lodge. "Look at that, will you?"

The doctor looked, his eye directed by the irately trembling finger of the magnate, to a line whereon he read: "Cuttybone Select 3."

"Cuttybone Select at three," snapped the old man, eyes blazing irascibly. "Nelson, by Jupiter, naming a stock after me and then letting it go to three cents. Three cents! Look at 'em—three cents! Count 'em, three cents! Why, dash him, it's a disgrace. It's an insult. My name? Hell!" The old man's voice went crashing down in harsh gutturals, and he flung the paper on the floor in his rage, stamping it with his slippered feet.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Cuttybone!" urged the physician.

"Calm the devil!" exploded the old man again. "That stock was promoted at twenty. A lot of my friends were let in on that stock. Cuttybone Select!" The measure of the old man's scorn was pronounced. "Who selected it, I want to know. I didn't. Select the devil!" His voice sank in grinding gutturals again while he showed what an amazing amount of vitality he still possessed, by irately kicking the paper to shreds with his heels before he sank exhausted into his chair.

"Cuttybone!" he panted, when he could get breath again. "Cuttybone Select! Why, it can't be more than a hundred and fifty miles through the range by the Bodie grade, down to where that property lies. I have a notion to go over there and see what the damned thing is like, anyway."

"Oh, but Mr. Cuttybone!" The eyes of the doctor grew round with alarm and his features grave with reproach. "Such an effort would be fatal."

"Fatal be dashed!" snapped the old man. "I suppose it isn't fatal to have your name scuffled under foot on the stock-exchange, and have it kicked about in the very gutter of the New York curb. That's never happened to a Cuttybone stock before, not while I've had a dollar to protect it."

It occurred to the seething old gentleman to look at the date of his newspaper. It was six days old.

"Holy Michael!" he groaned. "Cuttybone Select is dead and buried." With a despairing hiss of purpling wrath he settled back once more in his chair, muttering in tabasco tones: "Nelson! Ah, blast him, Nelson!"

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tybone Select, so quietly as never to send the price up more than a cent or two at a time; then he would wait till it sagged and go on absorbing again, until now he held eight hundred thousand shares of it and felt that his holdings were sufficient. Accordingly he telegraphed to McWilliams: "Now let the good news come. Your strategy in sending low reports has worked out beautifully."

Glen read that telegram and collapsed upon the end of his spine. "My strategy!" he gasped. "The fox! He knew those reports must be manipulated, and he paid me the doubtful compliment of supposing that I had done it to help him break the market. Gee, but Nelson's quick—quick and—cocksure! That cocksureness is what I'll beat him with. He'll hang on and hang on till it's too late to cut himself down."

McWilliams drew to him telegraph blanks and code-book and fashioned a message which said: "Your assumption in error. Assay reports bona fide." Now the assay reports were bona fide, and Glen felt that he saved himself from utter mendacity by the framing of his communiqué. "Guess that'll stagger him!" he exulted.

At any rate it appeared to wake up the vice-president to disagreeable possibilities, for he flashed back an answer which, being decoded said:

"Put on night shift. Necessary to success our plans to show big values within week."

Glen put night-shifts on the east and south shafts only, and wired: "Night shifts on both shafts."

Since Nelson had ordered work discontinued on the east shaft, it was inevitable that he should construe "both shafts" as meaning the north and south shafts. Glen grinned sardonically. He was beginning to like the game. From feeling frightened over crossing swords with Nelson, he began now to feel a certain exaltation as each new monkey-wrench was thrown into the machinery; and for three days and three nights he continued to flash reports shift by shift that would have broken the heart of the stoutest optimist. And Nelson was not an optimist at all; he was merely a shrewd and daring gambler.

"What is your theory?" he wired finally. It was almost pathetic.

"Have no theory. Reports I have been obliged to send you are certainly discouraging."

"There, now," commented Glen as he fashioned this rather simple message, which was, after all, a masterpiece of pessimism, "I guess that'll put him out of his misery. That'll ring the knell in Nelson, all right."

AND it did—loud and strong. Quick always to act upon his perceptions, Augustus realized that he had acquired the majority of the stock in a first-class flivver. His bright dream had flickered out. He was in the hole sixty-seven thousand dollars in round numbers. The wise thing to do was to swallow his disappointment, bitter as the dose was, and figure how to get his sixty-seven thousand back. Swiftly he evolved a plan and all but wheeled his stock down Broad Street in a barrow to the curb market. He sent

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a carefully worded telegram to his brokers in San Francisco. His holdings in Cuttybone Select were to be stacked up like the paper drinking-cups at the fountain and fed out skillfully from the bottom as buyers would take them—if buyers would take them, and Nelson hoped fervently that the long-shot players might be abroad in large numbers. Then he climbed into a train and started westward. Thinking of his young associate out on the desert, who must be at least as downhearted as himself, and who was much less injured to it, he telegraphed from Albany: "Too bad. Everything was set here for the biggest killing two men ever made. But cheer up. Am coming out to see if cannot recoup. Arrive Monday!"

"The dickens he is!" expostulated Glen, and leaned back aghast. Then he consulted the calendar. The Nelson grip on the Bennett claims was strong for six days more—and Augustus Shylock Nelson would arrive in four days!

"Is there a ghost of a show of my fooling that old coyote for forty-eight hours after he gets here?" the young man inquired of himself, and decided swiftly that there was not. "He'll uncover what I've done to him the first day, and then the ammunition dump will blow up! He'll fire me, of course; and afterward he may ask why I did it."

SORE at the prospect of defeat, Glen turned out into the open air and decided upon a run into the desert to clear his mind. It was perhaps hardly strange that his roadster in the course of this run swayed up a certain narrow cañon that pointed toward the bald top of a mountain that to him was coming to be a sort of holy ground, for in recent weeks he had rather formed the habit of running out there. The second time he had made the trip it was to inquire about the condition of a wounded hand. He had been hospitably received—no more, but also no less; and during the call he became aware of strange internal disturbances that centered in his breast. He did not concede to himself what these disturbances might mean. Instead he only came home swearing vehemently: "I'll beat him! I'll beat Nelson yet. He'll never get her claims. He never will."

And that was what he came home saying this afternoon, only with a little weightier emphasis than he had ever said it before; but having failed to evolve a plan for the defeat of Augustus Parker Nelson by himself, he decided to call into consultation his superintendent, Big Bill Watters. Bill was a good superintendent and a skilled miner; but he was also a romanticist at heart. He was a knight errant of the days of chivalry, save that for armor he wore overalls, while for a lance a prospector's hammer rested usually in the hollow of his arm.

"By Golly, I heard about that little woman a-pecking away over the hill there," recalled Bill with instant sympathy. "Trying to take her little ewe-lamb of a mine away from her, is he, when he's got a Golconda of his own right there in the ground? I'll fuzzle him, the chin-whiskered old Piute! Leave him to me, Mr. McWilliams, is all I've got to suggest."



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And that was exactly what Glen did, with a fine feeling of confidence that sent a glow through his veins.

Monday morning arrived, and with it Augustus Parker Nelson. His manner at once betrayed the fact that, besides anxiety and disappointment, suspicions had begun to form in his mind like mother in a jug of vinegar.

"Somebody's been putting something over on us," he snapped. "It's not according to nature for that vein to peter out the way the assays show."

Glen was feeling edgy himself. He had slept little for two nights. The rasping voice of the nerve-strung vice-president kindled him to anger.

"Nobody is putting anything over on me!" he retorted sharply.

"Then maybe you are putting something over on me!" Nelson's fanglike teeth, behind their fringe of black beard, showed in a wolfish snarl.

But this abrupt if not entirely unmerited accusation of duplicity, instead of angering the young financial agent further, served rather to chill him to cool, precise action. He sat back in his chair, his thumbs hanging in his trousers pockets, a pose of calm detachment.

"You can read figures, Mr. Nelson," he said icily. "There are the assay reports of the last few days. You can take samples. The shaft is where it was when you saw it last. I told you only what I thought was in the ground; and you must realize that I would be more disappointed than you if I were to find my predictions wrong. It's only money to you. It's money and reputation to me."

"Yes, yes—of course," admitted Nelson, chewing at his goatee in a kind of angry self-reproach. "There's no use my ragging you. Let's go out to the property. It's a pretty killing we've missed, and I've got to satisfy myself we've really missed it."

GLEN did not enter the shaft himself, however, as he wished for the present to be freed of every taint of suspicion. Bill Watters went down with Nelson. With Bill's own hammer the vice-president cracked off bits of rock at various depths and Bill himself took the samples as Mr. Nelson gave them to him, and put them by rotation in different pockets so that he could remember from whence they came.

"It looks like ore!" declared Nelson.

"It sure is ore," affirmed Bill, who was not supposed to know that according to the reports it was merely rock.

"Better sack and label them for me," said Mr. Nelson, when they were again on the surface. Bill went into his little coop of an office to do this, and presently placed the four sample sacks, all properly labeled, in the roadster under the feet of his vice-president.

"I'll know pretty quick, by thunder, whether there was anything phony about those other assays or not," the latter snapped to Glen who was driving. "I'll take 'em up to Brown at the extension and get him to do them for me as a personal favor."

But Brown's furnace was cold and his assay office was swept and garnished for the day. However, as a favor to so big a man, he set his grinding machine going

once more and his little cones of benedust cake ready for their important part in the operation, while the furnace was fired. Nelson hung around. He might have been down the street, absorbing the gossip of the town, listening to the stories of prospectors and miners who came in from the hills, or he might have been glancing at the board in the broker's office to notice how dead the Cuttybone Select stocks were lying; but he would do none of these things. He was determined to watch those bits of ore through every process till they gave up what values they possessed.

At length the process was complete. One dollar and a quarter, two dollars and thirty-five cents, four dollars and eighty-two cents and "a trace," the samples ran, showing that old Bill Watters was something of a prestidigitator as well as an expert miner.

"Nothing much, hey?" Nelson tried to remark casually, as if it meant nothing in particular to him. "Awfully much obliged to you though, Jim; I'll make it right sometime."

"Glad to do it for you, Mr. Nelson," said the assayer, and the vice-president of the D. E. C. was out and down the hill, cursing unctuously as he proceeded.

"It's true," he croaked as he walked nervously into the office. "The rock has petered till it isn't worth taking out." He deposited himself gloomily in a chair.

FOR a moment Glen actually felt compunctions—it was going so smoothly for him that he could consider for a moment that Augustus Parker Nelson was getting a raw deal. "It may get better yet," he suggested, not deeming it wise to let the man's spirits sink too low. "A week more cross-cutting may uncover—"

"Uncover nothing!" snapped Nelson. "I tell you we're sunk without a trace."

"Here's a telegram for you, Mr. Nelson," said Matt, coming in just then. "It's been here two days, but you got away this morning before I knew you were here."

The vice-president snatched at the message, tore it open and under a New York date line read:

Mysterious buying power appears to have entered the market with interest confined entirely to Cuttybone, buying unostentatiously but so steadily that in last two days more than four hundred thousand shares have been absorbed Under this influence stock has advanced to eleven cents.

For a moment Nelson forgot his grief. "Let the mysterious buying power have 'em," he cried, tossing the telegram upon Glen's desk. "Let it keep on taking 'em. I'll get my sixty-seven thousand back and something more if they swallow much of it at eleven cents."

But a moment later apprehension angled the Nelsonian brows, and a puzzled light appeared in the restless eyes. Doubt, uncertainty, the torment of reviving suspicion agitated his mind. Speculation concerning this mysterious buying power made him suddenly wonder if he might not have been victimized by some one more astute, more unscrupulous even than himself.

"That fellow Watters is straight, isn't he?" he asked quickly.

"I can't imagine him seeing anything crooked going on without putting his heel down on it hard," replied Glen.

"Yes," admitted Nelson, looking relieved again. "That's the way I size him up. No; we've lost. Our plan was all right; but the streak didn't hold out; that was all. Forget it, McWilliams. I'll go on down to Frisco and get busy once more on the general list. If that mysterious influence only keeps on buying, I'll have my money back and a profit besides, and some syndicate of fools will have a nice lot of pretty paper on their hands."

The vice-president consulted his watch. "Believe I'll get a bite to eat, Glen, and take the road again; want to make that morning train for the Coast. I've got to get things moving down there once more."

HE did not say a word about the options. Dorothy Bennett's claims were safe. Glen's heart leaped. His strategy had worked, and against one of the smoothest manipulators in the mining game. The young man's knees actually trembled as he stood up.

"I presume you are wise, of course, to take it like this," said Glen, and when his voice trembled a little, Nelson felt a sudden consideration for the younger man and tried to buck him up.

"Nonsense, McWilliams," he said. "Don't let the mere vanishing of one fortune make you weaken. Other opportunities will come, and even Cuttybone development will go on while the treasury fund lasts; and the rock may change, as you say. We owe it to the stockholders to go on as long as we can."

It sounded funny to hear Nelson talk of what they owed the stockholders.

"Yes," admitted Glen, for it was a part of his plan to keep the hope bug still biting in Nelson's brain, "another week may tell a different story."

"That would be just my luck now, wouldn't it?" gloomed Nelson. "After the other fellow has the stock!" Turning, he took up his coat to depart, but just then swift, light footsteps came down the hall, and an eager knocking sounded on the door.

"Come in!" called Glen. There entered hurriedly the slender figure of Mrs. Dorothy Bennett, in brown denim overalls, with a bandana handkerchief about her neck, just as he had first seen her. There was a flush upon her face, a dazzling light of brilliance in her eyes, and she seemed more girlishly attractive than ever.

"Oh, Mr. McWilliams," she began, but the sight of Nelson's dour face checked her impetuosity, and the flush of excitement shaded into the deeper hue of embarrassment; but this was only momentary. "Oh, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Williams! Look here!" She was waving some papers in her hands. "I've got big values in both claims—seventy-two dollars in one, and two hundred dollars and over in the other! The assayer was so enthused he sent them out to me by special messenger, and I was just so crazy I jumped right in the messenger's car and came back to town to show them to you. Isn't it wonderful?"

Though she had addressed herself to both, Dorothy proffered the assayer's slips to Glen. Already he had turned

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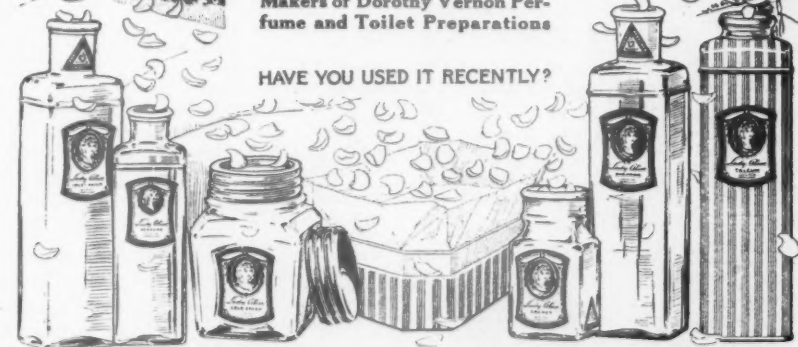
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cold at the effect of her words. This was the one possibility he had not thought of. For a moment he could not look at Nelson. Instead he glanced at the slips and then over the tops of them his gray eyes shot a beam at the girl that was almost reproach.

"Why?" she exclaimed, staggered, "aren't you . . . aren't you glad?"

Nelson, with a crafty light suddenly gleaming in his eye, was reaching for the reports. As he read them, his face took on again its expression of fox-like cunning.

"Glen," he purred softly, with a nervous croak in his throat, "where is that option on this property?"

Glen had by this time turned on his superior officer, but stood white and motionless.

"Where is that option?" asked Nelson again, a slight irritation in his voice at Glen's immobility which was explained as he recalled the protest that young man had made against the terms of the bond at the first.

"But—but—aren't you glad?" persisted the girl.

"I would be glad, Mrs. Bennett," answered Glen hotly, but in words that were clipped out precisely, "if this man had not taken away your mine from you already with that foolish option at four thousand dollars."

"But the D. E. C.?" appealed the girl.

"The D. E. C. had nothing to do with it. The option is his, and he will try to close it today. I have been trying to make him forget it. I had succeeded. I was just sending him away with his interest in Cuttybone Select and everything around it temporarily numbered until this option should expire, but your announcement defeats my plan entirely."

"You—you young hound!" Nelson roared, bristling like a jackal. "Did you double-cross me? Did you?" His voice trembled with rising rage; his eyes flashed, and his teeth gleamed.

BUT Glen was not afraid of Nelson physically. He held him with his eye and explained calmly: "Mr. Nelson, I was determined that you should not rob this woman. I pleaded with you not to do it, and when you were obdurate, I decided to defeat you by strategy. I had all but done so when—"

"You young devil!" Nelson raged, with lightnings in his eye. He struggled for words fitly to characterize such a person, and failing, broke out suddenly in shrieks of derisive laughter, for his mean soul had stumbled upon a comforting thought. "You threw your own chance away too," he shrieked. "You threw away a quarter of a million! Besides, I'll get you for this! Don't think I won't."

Dorothy was genuinely frightened by the man's foaming rage. She put her own slender body between him and Glen and addressed the latter: "And you did all of this for me? Risked what must have seemed like a fortune to you and lost it? You dared this—this creature's malice, just for me?"

"No," declared Glen stoutly, "for my own honor."

"Honor!" sneered Nelson. "Honor!" And he snapped his finger, as though Glen's honor were from now on entirely



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negligible. "Young man, you are discharged! You are discharged immediately as a traitor to the interests of the company that employed you."

"You can discharge me, of course," admitted Glen, with a shrug of his shoulders, "and you can make it on those grounds, I suppose."

"But oh," broke in Dorothy, thrusting out her hands to Glen, while a look of very tender reproach came into her eye and a tone of very loving chiding into her voice, "now you have lost your position. You should not have endangered yourself for me. I am such a forlorn person that I'm hardly worth fighting over, and—Why!"

A cry of alarm had come from her lips and a startled expression appeared upon her face as she turned at new sounds in the hall outside—sounds of a querulous, rasping voice, that demanded vehemently: "Nelson! Yes, Nelson! Where is Nelson? Dash it all, I want to see Nelson. You say Nelson is here. Now where is Nelson? Produce Nelson!"

A NUMBER of pair of footsteps approached the outer door; the hand of Matt Hammel opened it, and the figure of an old man, emaciated and fragile, leaning heavily upon the arm of a Japanese attendant, but displaying in the blaze of his eyes and the shrill tones of his irascible voice a surprising amount of vitality.

"Mr. Cuttybone!" exclaimed the vice-president, with a mingling of surprise and deference, as he stepped forward.

"Yes, Cuttybone!" barked the old man. "What the Sam Hill have you been doing to our properties when—" The old man stopped dramatically and looked intently at the frightened girl in khaki. "Who? Who is that masquerader?" he demanded harshly; but—as he saw the girl trembling and pale, yet, after that first shrinking, stand up spiritedly among all these strangers, and face him, not defiantly, nor yet in humility, but, rather, with a look of growing concern and sympathy for what she beheld—his own features slowly relaxed, and momentarily they might have been said to have softened—actually softened. Then the old arms were extended.

"Dot!" he said. "Come here!" "Dad!" cried the girl. "Dad!" and flew into his embrace. Then she gently eased him into a chair, and sank to her knees beside him, tears stealing furtively down her cheeks. Even the fountains of old Simon Cuttybone's emotions were, for the time being, revived.

"Bless my soul!" he babbled, oblivious to any audience but his daughter, whom he did not cease to caress. "Bless my soul! God forgive me for driving my only child out of my heart, out of my home, out of my life, just because she married old Bennett's idiot of a son. Father and son idiots, both of 'em! And now what have they done to you? Tell me? Tell me quick!" The imperious old man's cane rapped upon the floor, and he panted for vengeance against those whose actions must have been responsible for the plight in which he had found his daughter.

Dorothy told him quickly, compressing chapters into sentences.

"But oh, Dad," the girl remembered,

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"No, not ill—just in dock for a few repairs," replied the old man, who thereupon seemed all at once to recall that there was other business on his mind, and that there were other persons in the room, for both McWilliams and Nelson had been compelled by the situation to linger embarrassed on the stage of action. "Eloped from the doctor and sneaked over from my shack in the redwoods to give this frivolous financier Augustus Parker Nelson a touch of the old red raspberry," he explained with heated irony. "And now, Nelson, speak up! What have you got to say for yourself, Augustus, letting Cuttybone Select go to the gutter and leaving me to pick it up."

"You to pick it up?" inquired Nelson, bewildered.

"I just got a telegram at the station telling me my brokers had gathered in, all told, nine hundred thousand shares and the stock was back to twenty where it started. That's picking it up two ways, I rather guess. But come on, now; out with the inside stuff, Nelson! Why didn't you protect the stock, I say?" The sarcasm of the old man's tones was exceedingly unpleasant, and he flourished his arms angrily at Augustus. He had just crossed a desert by easy stages, taking two days to do it, to secure an answer to this question, and he proposed to have it forthwith. Augustus attempted the bland and easy.

"It was due simply to a piece of rank treachery on the part of this—"

"Don't lie, Nelson," broke in Glen quietly. "You can fire me but you can't lie about me."

If Nelson was not to lie, he had nothing to say, and was for a moment sulkily silent.

"I can tell you something, Dad, and I guess I'll have to," interjected Dorothy, and she recounted what she had been able to gather, concluding: "And so I am sure Mr. McWilliams did nothing wrong, and he gave up his chance to make a quarter of a million dollars just to save my claim for me."

"But I didn't understand, sir," qualified Glen, "that the quarter of a million was to be at the expense of the stockholders, or I wouldn't have entered into the arrangement."

BUT if Simon Cuttybone's anger had seethed before, it was searing white-hot now as he directed a scorching glance at Nelson and then turned to reassure Glen.

"I can understand that, young man. Your conduct has been straight and it has been shrewd. It has my entire approval. I'll have you out right away to show me over the property."

"But Dad," reminded Dorothy, "Mr. Nelson has just discharged him."

"Fired, hey?" said the old man, contemplating Glen, standing straight and slightly flushed at his desk. "By Nelson, hey? Well, I'll just fire Nelson. Nelson, you're fired! McWilliams, you're hired—hired in Nelson's place to be vice-president of the D. E. C."

Nelson's eyes glittered, and he laughed disagreeably. "There's nothing for me to

say, I guess, where the cards are stacked against me," he sneered.

"Yes; and you stacked 'em," said the president, turning upon him fiercely. "You stacked 'em!"

"I still hold one," challenged the vice-president, having sorted out the bond on the Dorothy claims from the others upon Glen's desk.

"He has a water-tight option on Miss Dorothy's claims for four thousand dollars running to himself," explained the new vice-president.

"Well, if he presses it, I'll put him behind the bars for what he tried to do to all of us in Cuttybone Select," threatened Simon. "Here! Hand that option to me."

Instead, Nelson dropped the document back upon the desk. He doubted old Cuttybone's ability or his purpose to put him in jail, but he did not doubt his power or his implacable malice, as witnessed just now by a stubborn harshness that could drive a daughter from him and make her choose to face the rigors of a lonely fight for freedom rather than appeal to him. Glen himself took up the option and placed it in the hands of Mr. Cuttybone.

"You merciless scoundrel!" ejaculated Cuttybone as he read it, tearing it into scraps and flinging them with violence upon the floor.

"Oh, I would have treated her right, of course," Nelson assured him blandly.

"See that nobody hears any more of this document!" commanded the stern old autocrat; and Augustus Parker Nelson, with curling lip, with eyes gleaming balefully like the baffled villain in a melodrama, shrugged his shoulders and turned to take up his coat from the chair.

"It was a mistake, trusting you," he said coldly, looking straight into the eyes of McWilliams.

"Yes," intervened Cuttybone, with an approving glance at the new vice-president. "I think, Nelson, it would be a mistake for any crook to trust him. That's why I'm going to turn over to him that whole block of stock I just gathered in—after we've made reapportionments to protect the people you've robbed. He'll make his quarter-million and be set to make more."

"But I don't deserve anything like that, I'm sure, grateful as I am," protested Glen.

"Don't be grateful," snapped the old man; "be honest. I don't suppose you deserve it, either, but I'm going to give you a chance to deserve it later."

"Oh, Dad!" exclaimed Dorothy enthusiastically. "That's wonderfully fine of you. Wonderfully generous and jolly! And, oh, I'm so glad this awful business between us is all over and you and I are just father and daughter once more."

"It makes me well!" declared old Simon, and he stood up quickly with an unusual display of vitality.

An hour later, while they were carrying the old man up in an improvised litter because he insisted on himself inspecting the corrugated iron shack in which his daughter had lived a miner's life for two months upon the desert, the excited doctor overtook his patient, who had gone A. W. O. L. so recklessly, and that same evening started him back toward his mountain retreat, protesting but triumphant.

"You come over and see me, every week-end," Simon demanded of Glen. "It's only five or six hours' ride for a young husky like you from these alkali meadows to my redwood grove."

"I will," promised Glen.

"And you, young woman—you get your duds packed up tomorrow and out of here. Get a chaperon or a companion or something and put yourself up at the Riverside Hotel till your business is over; and if it isn't over quick, I'll send a lawyer up there who'll put it over. Then you head for my camp."

"I promise," laughed Dorothy.

NEXT morning Matt Hammel entered the old office of the new vice-president with a scowl upon his face, but a gleam of humor in his eye. "There's one of these bothering divorcees out here to see you," he announced brusquely.

"Matt!" exclaimed Glen in a voice of stern reproof. Matt bowed humbly as acknowledging the reproof.

"Show her in!" The door opened, and Glen saw standing before him an almost unrecognizable Dorothy. She was in skirts! For a moment his mind was bewildered as well as dazzled by the different beauty of this fairy, airy creature, clad in woman's rig from toe to head. Yet behind and within this bundle of bewitching apparel Glen recognized the eyes, the lips, the cheeks, the curves that he had known as Dorothy.

"Oh, Mr. McWilliams," she exclaimed, waving a telegram. "Everything good is happening to me now. My liberty has come. It was unexpectedly easy and unexpectedly soon. I am free!" Although she did not really laugh, there was the ring of laughter in her tones. "You can call me just Dorothy now."

"—D—Dorothy!" Glen found himself stammering, "I congratulate you!"

There ensued between the two a moment of embarrassed silence. The young man had learned to feel rather deliciously at home in the presence of the owner of the Bennett claims; but this modishly gowned daughter of old Simon Cuttybone rather overwhelmed him.

"I suppose you'll be getting away from here soon," he finally managed.

"Oh, yes," she responded with a restless waving of her arms and a burst of excited laughter. "I want to resume my girlhood again, to run and climb trees and wade in brooks. I want to join dear old crotchety Dad in his lodge in the wilderness and cheer him up and make him well. I want to go to the theater and the movies, to golf, to motor, to travel, to do a thousand things without let or hindrance of any kind, just to assure myself that I'm once more my own property and—"

"But—but—" Glen interrupted with a sudden access of boldness, "I cannot possibly wait for you to do all those things before coming to ask for at least an option on—the property."

Dorothy looked puzzled for a moment then, divining the deep earnestness behind the humor in his eyes, she smiled.

"May I—have the option now?" he pleaded.

She hesitated only a moment.

"You may," she said, straightening her arms to him.



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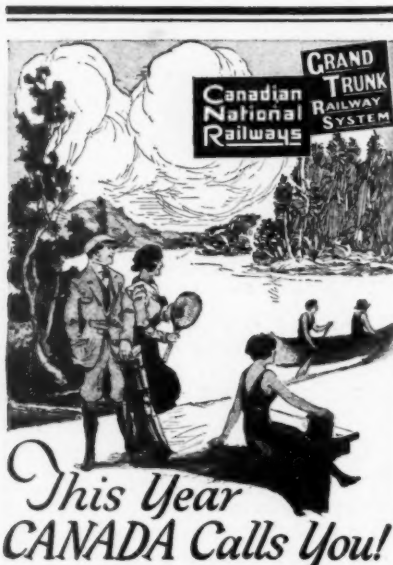
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FAIR TO MIDDLEING

(Continued from page 41)

and the protectorship which no woman can bear to have denied her. He followed McNab as a dog heels his master, worked on the farm, attended temple meetings, did the tasks no one else cared to do, and he neglected Dare as much as possible. Just as he never mentioned Ladyfingers nowadays, he never mentioned his love for Dare, or any regret that things were not to her liking. He ignored her in the polite fashion McNab taught him. What McNab wanted was to separate Amos from Dare—because he knew Dare would never accept his mandates. Yet Dare's jewelry, the existence of which he had learned from Amos, must not be overlooked—they must procure that before Amos should abandon her. Therefore Amos was, a valuable asset.

AMOS began quoting about the I-Am mind and the No mind and the wall between. Dare came up and laid her head on his shoulder—as she had used to do. "I love you," she said childishly. It was like a sunbeam temporarily illuminating a dark spot.

"Do you?" He forgot that instant the temple seer who had told him that certain souls must not be hampered by certain others.

"If you could only believe with me," he urged, "what a wonderful thing it would be! Tell me what you do believe—"

"What has that to do with unchanging love?" was her whimsical reply. "Tell me—will you take the final vows?"

"Would you stay with me if I did?"

"No." There was nothing threatening or uncertain about her refusal.

Kissing her, he whispered: "I shall make you change."

"That you can never do. I am convinced cults requiring abnormal group-living, removed from proper responsibilities, recreation, create spiritual parasites and often physical degenerates. I do not think shirking from material tasks is the proper attitude for either philosopher or thinker. And surely this is both hiding and shirking—not solitude and sacrifice."

Amos only smiled.

"Besides," Dare added courageously, "you have seen little of worth-while people. Your life has been spent with the disgruntled, blind ones. This man dazzles and surprises your intellect—he is a long way from reaching your soul. He seems a superb contrast to the borax-fields or the oil country. But were you to know men and women who do real things and lead quiet, sweet-scented lives, you would not fall prey to this hysteria. Promise me that before you take the final vows you will come with me into the world again—glimpse life from another viewpoint than McNab's. I believe many men pass through such stages as this, some less violent than others—only their wives never tell on them!"

Amos watched her intently. At this moment he was not the pretender McNab would have him, but a common-

sense philosopher who had weathered sufficient storms to qualify him to guide other mariners.

"How have you come to know this is not the truth?" he asked.

"By knowing solitude and sacrifice," she answered.

McNab appeared on the sand behind them, and approached, his bright, perverse eyes staring at Dare.

"I summon you," he announced, holding out a hand to Amos. "At temple meditation came a vision which you shall share."

Obediently Amos followed him.

She did not learn for several days what the vision was. More and more Dare kept to herself, patiently mending gray robes, peeling vegetables, writing accounts, acting as nurse for minor illnesses and bearing with Amos as one listens to a man babbling under an anesthetic.

Then Amos told the secret. The time to enlarge the colony and induce some industrial enterprise to establish itself on the dunes was at hand. But funds were needed. Every member must in some way raise a certain sum. Amos' wife had many unworn, vain jewels. Would she give them to the cause? Would Amos write to his wife's rich relations and ask aid?

Curiously enough, it was at this very time that Martin wired he and Fanny were coming to California for a second honeymoon. They would reach San Francisco within ten days, dropping down to Del Monte shortly afterward. Would Dare send word to their city hotel when and where she would see them?

At first Dare thought of hiding. She could not face them even as well as if they had swooped down upon Hangtown! That had been clean poverty, at worst, and a brief confession supplemented by a little crying would have cleared the atmosphere! But her present state was difficult to explain to such lotus-eaters as the Reids! Moreover, Dare knew Amos was not himself; they would call him a knave or a fool—which would only strengthen his loyalty to McNab and his determination to take those "final vows." Dare could anticipate Martin's terse comment when McNab's plan was told him. It would be something like—

"Nervy dog—what rot!"

And finally, slumping to the eternal feminine, "she had nothing fit to wear."

CHAPTER IX

FANNY had successfully cultivated the always-money-in-the-family air, and her arrival at the seaside resort was instantly counted an acquisition. Not once did Fanny look backwards on her dizzy social climb. She might have been forever lost had she done so. Less and less were there hints of the former Fanny who had "a great deal of taste and all of it very bad," as Madam Reid had once insisted.

She inspected their suite with a regal air, insisted on some changes, installed cut flowers and ordered something for Martin to drink. Then the Reids waited the arrival of the Larkins.

The Reids' two children had been left at home. It was no effort for Fanny to slip away for a second honeymoon. As yet, nothing was an effort for her. She was even successful in affecting the young-girl-at-her-first-party type of dressing.

Fanny's family were "nicely settled," with never a discordant move to impede her social clambering. She was happy that Dare's husband had struck oil. Dare had written that Amos had sold his stock because they could no longer endure camp and were at the occult colony for a needed interlude. This Fanny did not understand. An occult colony was as reasonable to her mind as would have been a tiger for her second baby's playfellow. Religion to Fanny meant a chance to meet the best people unawares. No one went to service more faithfully than she after returning from abroad. Martin never had to worry about his soul. If he would pay the pew-rent, Fanny would occupy the pew. But an occult colony—this nonplused her.

"They'll have to give an account of themselves," she told Martin as they sipped their wine. "I hope Dare isn't dowdy. If this occult thing sounds peppery, let's run down to see it."

"But the food is sure to be rummy," Martin protested.

"We will only motor over for the day," she assured him. "Hand me Dare's letter—I am sure she said they would come tomorrow."

MARTIN obeyed. "Tomorrow is right—and we must meet them."

"It has been a long time since she has seen you, and she knows me only by letter," Fanny recalled her initial meeting with Dare. "It will be hard for her when we mention our children!"

Martin was re-reading the note. "Dear lady," he said, "I believe Amos is a second-rater. Do you imagine I'd have you stay away from everyone for almost four years?"

Fanny looked out at the sea. "Do you ever wonder about failures?" A significant gleam came in her amber eyes.

"Wow! Who is serious? No, I do not—unless they fail on my doorstep. Do you?"

"I'm beginning to—I find myself wondering about mobs," she said unexpectedly, "about the wonderful way they smash best-laid plans."

"Mobs always mismanage; the only thing to do is keep 'em amused—if you don't, they begin taking an interest in politics. Rome fed and amused her mob."

"And Rome—"

"If you say another word, I'll make you do your Salome dance to convince me I've not married an intellectual fire-brand! Pick out the largest chocolate in sight and consider yourself in disgrace, young woman. The idea of dragging socialism into our second honeymoon! Why, you almost set me to thinking. By the way, I must order dinner. What shall it be?"



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"Chicken and creamed mushrooms." Fanny's interest veered back to the point where Martin would have it. "Sometimes," she added, "I'm afraid of growing too stout—I do love to eat, though!"

"I'll sound the tocsin when I see any symptoms. Just now you are the most graceful ever. I'll tell you what we'll do—let us have dinner in our rooms as we used to in Paris."

"How lovely to belong to you!" Fanny said in gratitude. "I suppose you will spoil our girls as you do me. Wont they be lovely, by and by? I plan their coming-out parties, and how when wonderful men will love and marry them, we must stand by and applaud. I see them in their wedding gowns, the church trimmed with orchids—nothing will be too splendid for them!"

"We'll let them go honeymooning while we open our wedding-cake boxes, remember?"

"What nonsense!" Fanny laughed. "Well, please order the dinner while I don some gay misty thing. Do you know," she broke off abruptly, "I'm truly curious to see Dare?"

"Women are always curious," Martin replied.

So the Reids passed the evening with waltz-music and Fanny's gay misty gown, the rich dinner and the wine. Things usually happened as they planned, because they could pay for them, and things which could be purchased were always the basis of their happiness.

DARE and Amos had driven away from the colony to the small hotel where McNab had welcomed them ten months before. They were to spend the night here, catching a morning train for the resort. A constraint was upon them, each with vital yet different purpose waiting for their journey's end. With Amos, McNab's influence had caused him to accept the latter's dramatic, neurotic viewpoint. He felt this to be a sort of sacred mission, as McNab had taken pains to impress upon him. That it concerned worldly money deprived it in no way of its spiritual quality.

And McNab needed money badly. The monthly stipends of his followers did not cover his increasing expenses, nor the things McNab wanted to do to enlarge his field of endeavor—and also to please himself.

Had Amos possessed money, he would have given it to McNab. But he was penniless, apart from owing Dare. Dare had two hundred dollars, to his knowledge, and the jewelry still in Fanny's keeping. He would not ask her to sell the jewelry, but he would ask Reid, the man who toiled not, to spare the initial sum, since it would purify Reid's soul as well. With the overzealous spirit of the convert, Amos was keen to obtain the loan.

Dare welcomed the plan, although opposing it. It hinted of the end. Either Amos would abandon her and take his final vows, or he would be disillusioned, and they would both leave the colony.

In contrast to the Reids' evening, Dare and Amos walked by the ocean while the stars clambered to their place and shone down upon them protectingly. They scarcely spoke to each other, conscious

that when two persons are at cross-purposes, words only deepen the misunderstanding, whereas silence and the relief of physical striding over great waste spaces bring about a finer harmony.

Returning to the inn, Amos said gently: "Your cousins will think you shabby."

"That does not matter—when I stop to think of all the other things."

"They will blame me," he added, "unless they comprehend the life-work I am undertaking."

Dare smiled. Although she had not seen Martin and Fanny for years, she felt she knew what their attitude would be.

"If he refuses, McNab will be crushed," Amos urged; then he cried out pettishly: "Don't smile—you treat me as if I were a sick child."

"Perhaps I am correct in treating you that way," Dare returned. "If Martin refuses, McNab will find some one else." Dare went on sewing flowers on her hat.

"He knows no one else; his life is far apart from that of the idle rich," Amos defended.

"If he refuses, will you take final vows and leave me?" Dare's hands trembled as she put the question thus bluntly.

"I wont cross bridges ahead of time," Amos answered. But he had resolved that this should be his course of action.

THE Reids did not recognize Dare when she stepped from the train. There was a pause which expressed such pitying, indignant emotions that the atmosphere seemed charged with stinging arrows. Martin covered the confusion by saying Dare was so tiny, no wonder he overlooked her. And so this was Amos! Well, they were delighted. Where was their luggage? Ah, the one suitcase!

In leather-colored linen with amusingly bouffant hips and a black cape and shiny straw hat, Fanny betrayed her thoughts.

"Good heavens, Dare," she exclaimed as she kissed her, "whatever have they done to you!" And to herself: "I thought they were hotel employees come to work."

Blushing angrily, she greeted Amos; and somehow they drove to the hotel, where the Reids scuttled their guests upstairs and made a quick revision of their plans. It would never do to take them about—this shabby, white-faced young woman and her equally shabby husband. They could eat in their rooms; and should the Larkins stay but a day, it would be just as well; the Reids were keen on doing the Grand Cañon, anyway, and this would give them extra time.

Ten minutes after Dare and Fanny were alone, Fanny realized the pitiful deceit which she both resented and forgave. That she understood was not to be expected. Dare had married a worthless man, and she was a weak fool. Why had she allowed herself to get the worst of things? Fanny saw her duty clearly, a rather pleasant duty of patronizing Dare, taking her away from "this brute" and securing for her some nice, God-forsaken position such as educated women often hold. What would everyone say? Fanny was "simply stunned," as she told Dare, who answered quietly:

"Letters are futile. I never even tried to write the truth. You can describe a

jewelry robbery by letter but not a crisis of—shall we say the soul? Just now Amos is going through a hard, vague period—I do not fully understand it, but I am patient, which helps greatly. Everything goes whir- whir in my head when I try to explain to you—as if all the words in the dictionary spilled out at our feet and I tried to pick them up in proper order!"

"Martin will put him in his place," was Fanny's majestic assurance. "Isn't it strange how a girl circumstanced as you once were and one like myself can have changed places so completely? I was thinking of Martin's mother. How merciful it is she was spared this knowledge!"

Here Dare realized that women must either mother, or else play the old cat-and-mouse game.

CHAPTER X

THE "family luncheon" resolved itself into a curious affair of mixed purposes. The only mutually satisfactory elements were the food and the setting, which lessened the tension somewhat.

Martin felt it to be a bothersome job—this "ditching of Amos." And of course Amos must be ditched, because he had robbed Dare of youth and charm. Martin wished he had an assistant to do it for him.

He welcomed the arrival of the cordials. He wondered if they had better decoy Amos away, then persuade Dare that to elope with them was her duty and merely send Amos a letter telling him his place—and how best to keep it. Martin was not "up to scenes" when they concerned real things. He enjoyed Fanny's storms over an added pound of avoirdupois or her crying for a new possession, for they amused him. Something about the strong-faced man with such strange blue eyes, who ate sparingly and spoke in monosyllables, warned Martin that ditching Amos might be a life-sized job. However, it could be managed—money can do anything.

"The Hendersons ask for you," Fanny was saying. "I'm quite chummy with them—they adore our babies. Ella was engaged to an awful sort of man, and the family broke it off." She glanced at Amos, who was watching the dancing surf. "Betty is engaged to Van Curler—do you remember him?"

"Of course, we were in the same dancing-class for years," Dare answered. It was like unlocking the door to the past, always a dangerous adventure. "How are Alice Sloan and her little family?"

"They came in for money, on the Sloan side, and built the loveliest new house—spent thousands in rugs. I was with her when she bought them. I came home as discontented as if Martin had made me use rag carpets." Fanny laughed.

"Had to unbelt my roll to a fearful extent in favor of a rug-dealer," Martin admitted, delighted the conversation had taken on a familiar flavor.

"She has no taste—but then—neither had I at one time," Fanny added, with honesty. "But I flatter myself that I have now—even to hanging pictures."

"And Bly Scottswood?" said Dare softly.

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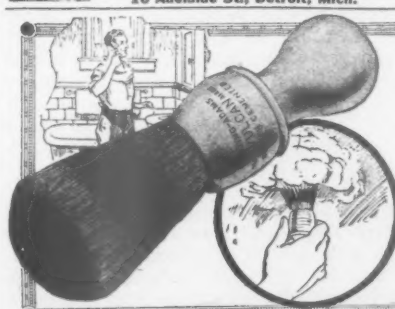
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"Your old beau?"—shaking a finger at Dare. "He has never married and has gone in for motoring. What do you think of that for devotion? He has the loveliest new car, a perfect little duplex apartment inside. I am mad about it, and my next birthday wont be a birthday at all unless I can match Spotty's car with one of my own."

Dare's cheeks were flushed; she seemed to have slipped back to the old days. Fanny was bubbling with gossip. Occasionally she looked at Amos, but he continued to stare at the sea, his reactions a mystery.

"When Molly McLane actually wept because you did not write her," Fanny was saying, "I did not know what to say. Molly and I are in charge of the Saturday Morning Current Topics Club; we had a wonderful season—you know, women are really beginning to be serious." "And my old blue room?" Dare asked wistfully.

"A guest-room now," Martin answered and smiled at her, "for 'very special guests,' as old Priestley used to define them. I know some one who will occupy it soon. More wine—Amos?" asked Martin.

Amos shook his head.

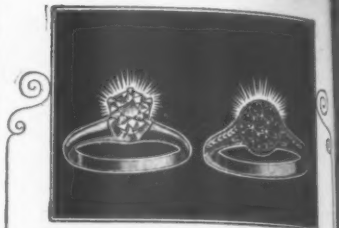
OF course she was not going back to the old blue room—she knew Martin would urge her to do so—any more than Amos was going to stay with McNab. Yet she enjoyed pretending that she was—just for one golden hour.

Fanny, in startling green and silver embroideries, a red satin cape flung over her chair, seemed a dangerous personage to Dare, no longer a merely stunning clothes-tree. There were depths within depths in those strange amber eyes, and somehow Dare recoiled as she looked into them. Martin seemed on the order of a stuffed and mounted animal in a hallway, she told herself whimsically. Nothing mattered except food, fun and Fanny! As she estimated what remained in the world of her family, she knew that Fanny's eye kept remarking her own unmanicured, ungroomed self—and the old-style dress, which sagged a trifle.

Fanny could never understand, because she had not served. Dare remembered certain particularly sordid incidents or tasks connected with the time spent in Hangtown—and contrasted them with Fanny's chatter about her last season's dinners and bridge luncheons. What a warp and woof it all was!

So the afternoon sped along, and when they put on motor things for their drive, Fanny wondered if after all it was their duty to rescue this Dare from Amos. Dare seemed so weak, so indifferent. She would be glad to replenish her wardrobe—but could she endure such a queer person always by her? She would talk it over with Martin, who would do as she said—so there was no need to worry. As for Amos, Fanny admitted secretly that in evening clothes he might be "a good-looking thing."

That evening, when the Reids were alone, Fanny broached the subject. She said she had "fairly bullied Dare into wearing a little silk dress down to dinner," having remodeled it hastily with a great slashing of scissors and papers of



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pins. Amos' suit was a nondescript thing, and with his careless manner, he passed for one of those "self-made Westerners." "Nothing much can be done," Fanny decided, stroking Martin's cheek. "It would interfere terribly with our plans if we made ourselves responsible for Dare's leaving him. Those quiet-looking men sometimes do queer things. If you start Amos in business, you must be prepared to vouch for him; and think what that might mean."

Tired from overeating and the drive, Martin complacently agreed. "I'll have a word with Dare tomorrow," he said, "and I'll loan Amos enough to start him at something and provide properly for his wife. I believe he is fond of her, but you're right—they are not our sort. Read me the rest of that story, Fanny, will you?"

Amos told Dare his decision to ask the Reids to visit the colony, where McNab's super-intelligence would certainly achieve the desired result. Dare was willing; she knew how Martin would turn aside the request with flippant yet decisive comment.

The next morning Martin managed to go walking on the beach with Dare, since Amos had gone for a hike and Fanny was content to have her breakfast served in bed.

"What sort is he?" Martin began abruptly. "Do you want to get away? I'll help you, if you say the word. Whatever made you do it, anyway?" Having said this, Martin felt it was Dare's "lookout" and not his, whatever might come to pass. He had extended the life-line, so to speak.

Dare tried to explain. "I don't want to leave him; he is my husband," she insisted. "This religious phase will pass—it corresponds to a man taking a drug. This man McNab is half-knave, half-seer—and sometimes more one than the other, and he has Amos at his mercy. Something will reveal his knavery some time, and Amos will recoil. Then we will begin all over again. You have not seen the real Amos, with his bad temper and his egotism, his dominant will and his bitterness of heart—but my Amos!" She flung back her head.

"Gad," ejaculated Martin, "I should think you'd let him be somebody else's Amos after that description."

DARE smiled. "That can all change," was her answer, "and to leave him now would be a coward's trick. McNab has neither morals nor limitations; he would demand a blood sacrifice if his frenzy inclined that way. He can be both ape and angel all in an hour. When Amos breaks with him, it is my duty to be beside him—to help him—if I can. So come to the dunes and refuse McNab."

Amos was walking toward them; the morning sunshine made him seem more oldish, though his eyes were keen with nervous energy.

"Martin will visit McNab," Dare called out to save him the asking. "We can motor over today."

Amos grasped Martin's hand. "You will meet a super-man," he declared.

The next installment of this engrossing novel by the author of "A Woman's Woman," will appear in the next, the May, issue of The Red Book Magazine.

W. L. DOUGLAS

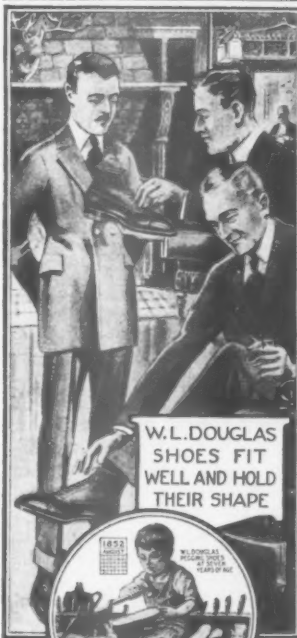
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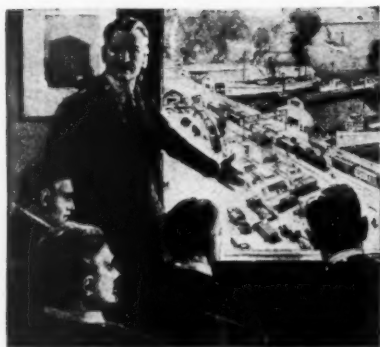
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APRIL FOOL CANDY

(Continued from page 85)

way, and you've got a fine war-record and medals and things, and you would never make me cheap by mixing it up with other women the way some of them do. Besides, they couldn't put anything over on you, the way they're trying to now with me."

It had struck me from what I'd heard about her suit that Maisie was trying to put something over on her producers, but naturally I didn't tell her so. And she had overrated my business ability by a whole lot. Her dad knew better than that, though he wouldn't admit it. I made a guess that since his silky little caterpillar had split her cocoon and unfolded her wings, he was getting fed up with chasing after her with his butterfly net, and not seeing much chance of marrying her off to Cox, had done some thinking and decided I was the next good bet.

MY boat was plugging along at her steady fourteen, and we were getting well out on that melted golden water. The night was the kind to put romantic punch in the bosom of a totem-pole, but it left Sir Henry Morgan cold. How do you account for that, sir? Here I'd undertaken to kidnap this girl because the sheer loveliness of her, and the want of her, had driven me plumb crazy; and now that she'd whipped around like a cat's-paw under the cliffs and drifted slap into my arms and was telling me that she'd about made up her mind to marry me, I was just as full of love and tenderness as one of my New England ancestors at the hanging of a witch.

Maisie couldn't have been shot full of feminine instinct, because she never got it at all. And now, as if not satisfied, she began to put the finishing touches to it. "I'll tell you a joke, Henry," says she. "Dad has managed to kid himself into thinking that he can really act! Can you beat it? And he's got the nerve to try to criticize me. I don't see how I managed to stand him and Auntie as long as I have. It aint as though they realized that they owed all they got to me and were grateful. You'd think I owed it to them, and a lot more. I made Cox give them their jobs, and now that they can hold 'em down, they can just cut loose from me."

"That would break your dad's heart, Maisie," I said.

She cocked up her face in a way that always fetched the fans. "Well," says she, "I'm very sorry, but I guess my nerves are more important than his heart. They are to me, anyhow. Besides,"—she gave my hand a little squeeze,—"if I decided to get married, I wouldn't want them hanging round the place."

"They might keep an eye on your husband while you were off on location," I said.

Maisie laughed. "I wouldn't worry about you, Henry," says she. "You're the constant kind."

"Yes," I answered, "I guess I am—up to a certain point." I got out of the hammock and stepping to the wheel, put

the helm hard over. "Back to the mooring," I said to the boy. Then, telling Maisie that the motor needed a look-over, I went below. The engine didn't want any adjusting, but I did. My head was humming, and I felt a little sick. But that passed in a second or two, and I pulled myself together with a curious sense of lightness, as if I'd got out from under some heavy load. I was like a bent cripple that has hobbled up to one of these faith-healers and after a few magic words flings away his crutches and walks off straight and strong.

Maisie was right. She had said that all a lovesick guy needed to do was to kidnap the cause of his trouble and he'd soon get his cure without paying any doctors' bills. But she was righter than she knew, because it hadn't been necessary to carry her off to a lonesome spot. She didn't even have to know that she was being kidnapped. Not in this case! The cure had worked before the lights along the shore got dim. And something told me that it was complete. Yes sir, let me tell you that seven years of unhappy married life couldn't have made it any more thorough!

I felt like sending up a prayer of thanksgiving for what I had escaped. Even Maisie's beauty was killed, so far as I was concerned. I knew that hereafter she'd look deformed to my eyes, and that the inch or two more or less in the dimensions of different parts of her would never disturb my sleep again. If I had taken the lever of the reversing gear and set our screw astern at full speed, the shift of power couldn't have been any quicker or more complete than it was in me at that moment. And the beauty of it all lay in the fact that I wasn't even wrenched. It had happened without any cogs stripped, no damage whatever to the engine. I'd fetched up and backed away under full speed without loosening a bolt or starting a rivet.

No doubt that was because I was no longer in love with Maisie but just wanted her, even though it was so hard that I was ready to take any chance to get her. And now that I didn't want any part of her as a gift, it left me without any soreness or appetite unsatisfied. I was sort of like a famished man that had taken a dose of ipecac just before he sat down to the table. The feast didn't look good to me.

I took a deep breath and went up on deck. Maisie was lying back in the hammock in her luxurious way, and she gave me one of those sweet, seductive looks that I knew so well. But it tempted me about as much as a lump of April fool candy might tempt the kid that's just bit into it.

"I thought you were going to kidnap me, Henry," says she.

"So did I, sweetie," I answered, "but after what you've told me, I can't bear to think of interfering with your art."

"I'd never have thought you were the kind of man to start something you couldn't finish," says she.

"You finished it for me," I said. "Besides, it wouldn't be a square deal to the girl I'm going to marry."

"What!" She cried, and sat up straight in the hammock. "Have you got the nerve to tell me that you're going to get married? You, Henry?"

"Yes," I answered, "I'm going to marry just the sort of girl you've got no use for. She's a girl with no particular ambition except to be a loving wife—and mother, maybe, and to get her happiness out of her husband and her home, with a Chink or two for the housekeeping, and a bunch of you movie stars for amusement, when she feels like it."

MAISIE stared at me with her mouth open. She was too astonished for the moment to be angry. "Well, upon my word!" says she. "Well, upon my word! You speak as if we were servants ourselves."

"You are," I answered; "but that's nothing against you, as long as your work is satisfactory. You don't cost as much as the Chinks, yet your wages are higher, because the whole public chips in a little to pay them. But you have to mind your step and do your work right, or you'll get fired, which is a darn sight more than house servants have to worry about."

"Oh, I guess anybody that works for a living is a servant, when it comes to that," said Maisie, "from the President down. But honestly, Henry, are you going to get married? I thought you were in love with me."

"I was," I answered, "until I saw that a rival had cut me out."

"My art?" Maisie asked.

"No," I answered. "You."

Maisie brought her mind to bear on this problem, and playing true to form, picked out the answer that suited her. "Well, I guess that's the same thing, Henry," says she. "I want to be a great actress, but I don't see why that should prevent my being a good wife."

"It ought not to," I answered.

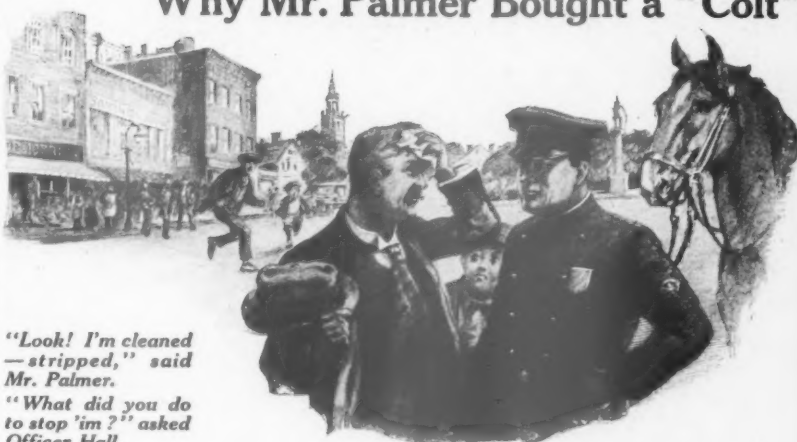
"Then why are you so stand-offish? Why don't you sit down here beside me and tell me that you're crazy about me and want me to name the day?" She made room for me as well as a person can in a hammock, but I laid my hand on the stanchion and stood there looking down at her. "Of course, you are just kidding about another girl, Henry," says she. "I know you think I haven't shown you a square deal, but I had a reason, old dear. Cox fell in love with me right at the start, and asked me to marry him even before he asked me to act for him. He'd never have taken me on if I hadn't told him that I was heart-free."

"So you told him that?" I asked.

"Well, don't you see I had to?" Maisie answered. "He had a silly idea I couldn't learn to act. He thinks different, now. He said so himself. But the way things have turned out, and now that I'm a successful star, I don't care what he thinks. I can sign up with anybody I like. Don't you see, dearie?"

I saw, all right. First she'd double-crossed me to get in with Cox, and now that he'd made her famous and independent of him, she was just as ready to double-cross Cox. As for her dad and aunt, they didn't count anywhere.

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"Listen, Henry," she went on in her sweetest voice: "maybe my head *was* a little turned at first, but I've been doing a lot of thinking lately, and I've decided that I don't want to marry anybody but you. I do love you nearly to death, dear, and I never realized it as I do tonight. Come, dear, you can give me a big hug and a kiss—" She caught her breath and gave a little shimmy—not the dance sort, but the kind the girls have been doing ever since the garden of Eden, I guess. "Well—" She looked up at me. "What more can I say than that? It's about time you said something, isn't it?"

"Yes, Maisie," I answered, "I guess I ought to have said it first. Now, listen, sweetie, and if you don't like it, just remember that I've played the game fair and square, until tonight. You've been within one jump of getting kidnapped. This boat is all ready for sea and provisioned for a month. When I brought you aboard about an hour ago, I had made up my mind to carry you off. I couldn't stand the want of you any longer, and I intended to do just what that fellow did in your picture tonight. And you played right into my hands. What you said to your father over the phone, with the boatman and the boy listening, let me out. I meant to carry you off, come what might of it. I didn't care."

Maisie gave a gasp. "Well, why didn't you?" she asked.

"For the only reason that could possibly have stopped me," I answered. "Because I didn't want to. I don't want to, now. Don't make any mistake. It wasn't for you or your beautiful art. While you

talked, I was seeing a picture of myself tied to a woman that thought of her husband as a sort of luxury necessary to her comfort and well-being, to be worn when she felt the need, like a fur coat. You cured me good and plenty, thank the Lord. So let's call it quits. We don't owe each other a thing!"

THAT was about all, sir. We finished our boat-ride with a little less noise than you might hear from the deck of a submarine stealing up on a ship. Fortunately we were nearly in, so the strain didn't break anything.

The joke of it was that a few days later I met up with a fine big, peachy girl worth a dozen Maisies in looks and character and disposition and everything else, and exactly the sort I'd described to her. And Maisie up and married Cox. I don't believe he swallowed much of her highfalutin' stuff, he not being just what you might call an inexperienced amateur in the pretty-lady line.

The last time I was East, I looked up an army chum and we went to see Maisie's latest picture. He had no idea I knew her, and a little later in the evening when he was raving about what a wonder she was and how a man would be ready to commit any crime for such a woman, I asked: "What would you say if I were to tell you that once she asked me to marry her, and that I turned her down?"

"Well," says he, "I might not say anything; but I'd think that you were a dam' liar."

So I didn't tell him.

EVERY MAN HAS HIS PRICE

(Continued from page 56)

Ramsey did not stop to ask them how they were so well acquainted with the lay of the burned house; youth has a way of imbibing accurate information of that sort by simply standing around and listening. Instead, he spurred them to new and more eager efforts of research by the offer of a pecuniary reward for any fresh discoveries.

All that afternoon he sat with his assortment of charred and broken relics spread out on a table before him, turning over in his hands now one, now another, and trying to read some significance into them.

But the most of the lot were meaningless, mere fragments of shattered china and glass, or bits of metal cracked and twisted by the heat, parts of faucets and door-knobs, two andirons, half of a kitchen sink, the steel box to which was still attached the bell of the telephone—a heterogeneous collection of junk. The only things that gave Ramsey any real suggestion were the reflector and the spool-like coil from the electric heater with the two bits of burned wood fastened to its connecting wires.

There was no longer any doubt in his mind that there had been a picture in the bungalow—just what picture he could not say—and that Achison had destroyed it and the house together for the purpose of collecting the insurance; but just how

the thing had been accomplished was still beyond his comprehension.

Achison himself had advanced the explanation of defective wiring, and Ramsey, with the evidence he had secured, was inclined to agree with him, with the added qualification that the condition was due to design; but considering the pretty well established fact that no one had been inside the building for two days, he was unable to see how the incendiary purpose had been consummated.

All afternoon and late into the evening he pondered the problem without arriving at any solution; but just as he was about to confess it beyond him, an unguarded movement of his elbow knocked one of the objects on his table to the floor, and stooping over to retrieve it, he gave himself a sharp prick upon the finger.

Involuntarily he glanced at the object to see what had caused this, and the answer he had been so vainly seeking was at last revealed to him. He sprang to his feet with a thrill of exultation. After all these months of dodging and twisting, he now had Achison in a corner from which he could not escape.

THE next morning, as soon as Ramsey could get into communication with the lawyer, he telephoned, asking for an interview.

"Come down to my office at once," Achison replied after a moment's hesitation, "—that is, if you have anything really important to talk about."

"I have," returned Ramsey with emphasis. "I'll be there inside of fifteen minutes. Good-by."

In immediate response to his card, he was shown into Achison's private room. The lawyer glanced up from a pile of papers on his desk, to nod indifferently.

"You look as if you had hurried," he said. "It's something I never do myself. I am too old and philosophical."

He leaned back in his chair and joined his finger-tips together, surveying Ramsey with patronizing superiority.

"Now, my young friend,—or shall I say my young enemy,—out with it. What's on your mind? I am a busy man."

"So am I," retorted Ramsey cheerfully. "I've been an extremely busy one today, up since dawn getting my evidence in shape and a statement written out—"

Achison's supercilious expression altered slightly.

"Constructing a theory, eh, and manufacturing the evidence to substantiate it? Ramsey, you shock me. I had almost said I wouldn't have believed it of you; but on second thought, it is just the sort of thing of which you are capable."

These gibes had no effect on Ramsey.

"Wouldn't you like to see some of this manufactured evidence of mine, and have me tell you just how the fire occurred?" he asked. As he spoke, he lifted a small handbag he had brought with him and placed it on the table.

"Go ahead," Achison's tone was scornfully tolerant, but his steel-gray eyes were alert and wary.

"Well, then," said Ramsey equably, "let us suppose that some one had acquired a picture which might or might not have been the work of a great master. Suppose, too, that that some one was a connoisseur who had been honestly deceived as to the authenticity of the painting, but who after it came into his possession discovered that it was beyond question a fake."

"Would not that some one, rather than submit to the ridicule of fellow-experts and collectors, wish to obliterate the picture in such a way that his failure of judgment would never be known? He would also—especially if he happened to be an Achison—want to make some one pay for his disappointment and the blow he had inflicted on his own self-conceit."

"The answer is simple. On the strength of his reputation in matters of art, and his social position, he would insure the picture as genuine and then destroy it."

"Reasoned just as I might have expected," The lawyer shrugged his shoulders.

The words meant little to Ramsey; but watching the other every second, he was conscious that Achison's wary vigilance had relaxed, and it puzzled him. Nevertheless he went ahead with his presentment.

"To do this thing I have outlined," he resumed, "offered serious difficulties. It must be accomplished in such a way that it would seem pure accident. The beneficiary of the fraud must be absolutely free from any taint of suspicion. That was doubtless a question that required



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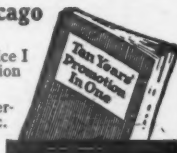
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Why Envy the Prosperity of Others?

It is hard to keep back the sting of remorse, and perhaps a little envy too, when you see your neighbor enjoying advantages that you cannot afford. Especially is this true when you know he is making no more than you. Perhaps you have wondered how he can make his money go farther—how he seems always to be on “easy street” while you have a hard time making ends meet.

The answer is that he *saves*. He is systematic in money matters. He doesn't buy everything he needs and everything he wants, and then expect to save what is left.

If you would stop envying the prosperity of others, you must put your saving and investing on a businesslike, systematic basis. Otherwise you will disappoint your children when they are ready for college and other advantages, and eventually find yourself face to face with dependency in your declining years.

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turned into the connecting wires. Some one, to accomplish that, must have thrown a switch inside the house. And no one had been there in two days."

"Objection granted," Ramsey smiled. "And I'm willing to admit that that very circumstance came near proving a fatal stumbling block to me. It was only by pricking my finger on a bit of twisted wire that I arrived at the solution."

"Let us suppose again," he proceeded in his former manner, "that the artful mind which devised this scheme had foreseen this difficulty and had provided against it. Suppose a very delicate switch had been installed in the lighting connections which would operate at the slightest pressure—even to so slight a pressure as the vibration of a telephone bell. Then all that one would have to do to throw the switch and set his house on fire would be to enter a telephone booth miles away and call up the number of the empty bungalow."

He reached into his handbag and set out upon the table the telephone-bell he had brought back from the ruins, pointing out the slender bit of fine wire twisted about its clapper, and against the end of which he had pricked his finger.

"That wire ran, as you had it arranged, from the clapper to an electric switch probably directly above it on top of the molding. All that was required was the vibration of the clapper, and the thing was done."

"You are caught, Achison!" His voice rang out in triumph. "Caught as surely and as strongly by that little loop of wire as if it were a noose of hemp!"

ACHISON never altered his position, but from the moment the telephone-bell had been produced with its telltale attachment of wire, his eyes had dropped to his desk.

But now he looked at the other man. His gaze was grave enough, but there was no fear in it. Ramsey paid him the compliment of not expecting that.

"I think I told you once before, Ramsey," he said, "that I have never made the mistake of underestimating you. But you are cleverer, far cleverer than I imagined you."

He rubbed his chin with his hand, and meditated a moment.

"Your theory is quite correct," he said suddenly. "Of course your discovery of the means I employed to effect my purpose is disconcerting to me. I do not pretend that it is not. As for convicting me of crime, that is another matter. You have the evidence to do it,"—as Ramsey started to interrupt,—"but—well, you will not use that evidence."

Ramsey gasped. What was the fellow driving at? Trying of course to divert his attention from the issue, playing for time. Well, he would get little advantage from that. His own mind was made up. Achison was caught. By the next morning his reputation would be in shreds.

And yet Wallace was conscious of a certain uneasiness. Achison was tasting the bitterness of defeat and was furious; there could be no doubt about that. But he had not the air of one who sees the house of cards he has spent years in erecting fall about him in ruins. Rather,

his attitude was that of a man who realizes that he is in a tight place, but still has a loophole of escape.

Achison pressed a buzzer on his desk. A clerk entered.

"Ask my secretary to come in," said the lawyer.

The clerk bowed and disappeared. Ramsey waited tense and ready; and then a young woman entered.

RAMSEY'S heart gave a sudden leap. He rose mechanically, his eyes widening as he gazed at her. She was the girl he had seen in Achison's car, and whose face had haunted him ever since—his needle in a haystack!

Her severe little black frock with the touches of white at the throat and wrists accentuated rather than subdued her flowerlike grace and charm. She brought into that dull and sober office something of the radiance of spring. But what struck Ramsey most forcibly was that in spite of her efforts to preserve a demure and businesslike demeanor, she was overflowing with a buoyant, irrepressible happiness.

"Miss Edgewater, I shall want you to take some dictation in a little while," Achison said, "but I am not quite ready yet. I shall ring when I need you. I also want to introduce Mr. Wallace Ramsey. I have an idea that he will be a good person for you to consult in making your future plans."

"I am sure that will be very kind," She gave Ramsey a shy and lovely smile, hesitated a moment, and then the door closed behind her.

"A charming girl," remarked Achison, "but in her present position a little mistake. Let me sketch her circumstances for you; they have a bearing on the matter between us."

"You know the story of Edgewater, of course. He was a client of mine. Rose, this girl, is a niece of his wife's. She was an orphan, and her aunt took her as a child and bestowed upon her the Edgewater name. Mrs. Edgewater herself has for a long time been a sufferer from arthritis, and is now bedridden, unable to move. The poor woman was left with no means whatever, nothing to live on except through the sale of the few pictures which were saved from her husband's collection, and which at last were all sold to meet her needs, with the exception of one which she regarded as too worthless to be disposed of."

"Last spring she wrote and asked me to come and see her. I found her and the girl in a deplorable situation. They were literally down to their last cent, their only remaining asset this miserable dabb of a picture, a worse than mediocre copy of Velasquez's 'Lady with a Fan.' Rose was taking a business course with the hope of earning enough to support the two of them, but her prospects were far from bright."

"I am not charitably inclined by nature. My heart is not easily touched. But I will admit to you, Ramsey, that the position of those two tenderly nurtured women, struggling merely to live, lacking the bare necessities of life, affected me deeply. I went through a good deal of hocus-pocus, examined the picture minutely, and then told Mrs. Edgewater that

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I was convinced it was in part, at least, the work of Velasquez. I took an option on it and removed it to my bungalow. Also, I gave the girl a place here in my office. As a private secretary, she is a wonderful musician. I have heard her play, and I am convinced that she has an unusual gift for music, which she certainly has *not* for secretarial work.

"I had not yet formulated any plan as to what I was going to do with the picture; but suddenly the idea came to me how I could provide for them and at the same time supply the funds to develop Rose's undoubted talent.

"I elaborated my scheme in detail. That bungalow had unpleasant associations for me, anyhow, as you may imagine. Then I successfully carried out the enterprise—not for my own benefit, mind you, but out of pure altruism."

"Then will you tell me"—there was a note of exasperation in Ramsey's voice—"why, instead of resorting to these criminal and dangerous methods, you did not provide for the old lady out of your own abundant funds and assume the responsibility of the girl's musical education?"

ACHISON lifted his shoulders.

"Simply because my way was more interesting."

Ramsey had a vivid imagination. The life of those two women with its pinching economies, its wretched straits, its constant apprehensions, unrolled itself like a cinema before him, hideously, photographically real.

Again the picture of the girl rose before him, her face turned from him in horror.

Opposed to its tremendous appeal was the dominating aim which had ruled his life for many months—the determination to end Achison's criminal activities once and for all. And now that the opportunity had come to him, he felt that he could not let it slip. He owed it to the public, to justice, to his own honor.

He strode up and down the room. He dropped back into a chair and drummed restlessly with his finger-tips. When at last he spoke, his voice was strained and hoarse.

"If I let you off, Achison, it is upon two conditions. Here they are: you will refuse to take any money from the insurance companies, saying that you have discovered circumstances which make it impossible for you to do so. Then you will make over to those two women from your own resources the exact amount of insurance you expected to receive."

Achison stared at him speechless. His face had grown livid, with blotches of dark red on the cheek-bones. When he found his breath, he leaned menacingly across the table.

"Ramsey, I'll be hanged—" he began. "You will, indeed," said Ramsey unperturbed, "—or more probably, electrocuted. And may I be there to see. But what you are going to do now, this morning, is to make over seventy-five thousand dollars to Mrs. Edgewater and her niece, and I am going to inspect the instrument by which it is conveyed, and also take charge of it and see that the provisions are carried out.

"That," he added "is my fee for compounding a felony."



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Prove that you are that kind of a man! The International Correspondence Schools are ready and anxious to help you prepare for advancement in the work of your choice, whatever it may be. More than two million men and women in the last 29 years have taken the I. C. S. route to more money. Over 130,000 others are getting ready in the same way right now. Surely the least you can do is to find out what there is in this proposition for *you*. Here is all we ask: Without cost, without obligating yourself in any way, simply mark and mail this coupon.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMOBILES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING AND HEATING | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEMIST | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Penmanship <input type="checkbox"/> Banking |

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Canadians may send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada

SHEAFFER'S

LIFE TIME PEN

Life Time Pen
with clip, 18.00
production shows
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Printed by Coles Phillips expressly for W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co.

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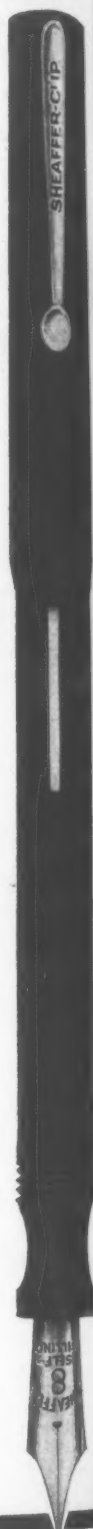
THE "Life Time" SHEAFFER is the most important advancement in Fountain Pen manufacture since the original lever-filler, which was invented by W. A. SHEAFFER. It is larger than the ordinary fountain pen and holds a much greater supply of ink.

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SHEAFER-CUT

"Served Perfectly!" How it is done with America's Favorite Beverage



With a deft, sure hand he adds the ice-cold, sparkling water. It looks for an instant as though the glass would overflow, but it doesn't. The amount is five ounces—exactly the right proportion.



You meet few men with skill like that of the soda fountain expert. He takes a six-ounce glass and draws just one ounce of Coca-Cola syrup—the precise base for the best drink—service that eliminates waste.

Take a six-ounce glass, not a larger or a smaller one.

One press on the syrup syphon, with the soda man's sense of touch for exact measurements, gives one ounce of Coca-Cola syrup—you know just where it should come to in the glass to be precisely the right amount.

Pull the silver faucet for five ounces of pure, ice-cold carbonated water—with the one ounce of syrup, this quantity fills the glass.

You may take up a bit of the proportion of water with ice, as a small cube or crushed. Stir with a spoon.

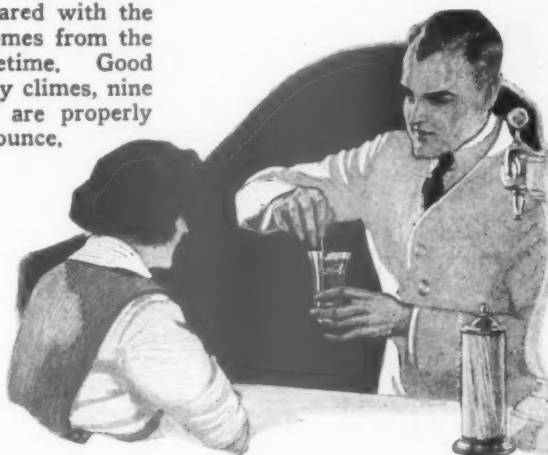
Done quickly? You bet. The rising bubbles just have time to come to a bead that all but o'er-tops the brim as the glass is passed over the marble fountain for the first delicious and refreshing sip.

That's the soda fountain recipe for the perfect drink, perfectly served. Coca-Cola is easily served perfectly because Coca-Cola syrup is prepared with the finished art that comes from the practice of a lifetime. Good things of nine sunny climes, nine different countries, are properly combined in every ounce.

It has all been done in flashes. The glass is before you before there is time for conscious waiting. Thirst is answered by the expert with Coca-Cola in its highest degree of deliciousness and refreshingness.

Guard against the natural mistakes of too much syrup and too large a glass. Any variation from the ratio of one ounce of syrup to five ounces of water, and something of the rare quality of Coca-Cola is lost; you don't get Coca-Cola at the top of its flavor and at its highest appeal.

Coca-Cola is sold everywhere with universal popularity, because perfect service and not variations is a soda fountain rule.



Drink

Coca-Cola

DELICIOUS AND REFRESHING

THE COCA-COLA COMPANY, ATLANTA, GA.



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